

LANKA

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M.G.R., R.A.W.,

TIGERS

I

ACCUSE



EXCLUSIVE

The P.R.I.O. Report

— Neville Jayaweera

FROM THE FRONT : Ron Moreau

Steve Coll

**ALSO Reggie Siriwardena, Eduardo Marino,
Izeth Hussain, Sunil Goonasekera**

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BRIEFLY...

● After a lengthy meeting with India's Foreign Minister Inder Kumar Gujral, Sri Lanka's High Commissioner in Delhi Dr Stanley Kalpage told the foreign press that he had been assured that India would not intervene in the war between government troops and Tamil rebels in in the island's North-East.

"They will not get involved. They will not send troops like last time", Dr Kalpage said. The Foreign Minister had been "very understanding and sympathetic" and regarded the current fighting as "purely an internal matter for Sri Lanka", the High Commissioner said.

● Two Sinhala reserve constables of the Kalmunai police escaping from their LTTE captors were helped to safety by two Tamil women, they said from their hospital beds, in Ampara. The two men had been in a group of policemen captured by the Tigers, but had managed to escape through the jungles after being shot at. They

had taken different routes but had both met kindly Tamil women who helped them, and had finally reached Sinhala villages from where they were despatched to hospital.

● The LTTE in Madras shot dead 14 EPRLF men in their temporary homes in that city. Among those killed, on June 19, were K. Padmanabha, Secretary General of the EPRLF and K. Kirubakaran, finance minister of the defunct North-East Provincial Council of Sri Lanka, and Mr V. K. Yogasankari an EPRLF member of the Sri Lanka parliament.

● The killing in Madras of EPRLF leaders including a member of the Sri Lanka parliament was condemned in a joint Opposition statement signed by the SLFP, MEP, SLMC, EPRLF, USA and TFILO. The opposition group has also written to Indian Prime Minister V. P. Singh and other leaders requesting protection for Sri Lankan parliamentarians and other representatives when they travel to India.

Correspondence

Determination of Ethnicity by biomedical evidence

"There are more things in heaven and earth, Horatio, than are dreamed of in your philosophy", wrote Shakespear in *Hamlet*. In rebutting my criticism, Izeth Hussain brings to my defence the names of Joseph Rothchild, P. S. Suriyanarayana and K. Sivathamby, on whose scholarship, he had inferred that the Tamils in Tamil Nadu and Sri Lanka are distinct ethnic groups (L.G., May 15). I presume that none of those cited scholars are biomedical scientists. Whether Sivathamby is "too much of a scholar" or a mediocre academic is not the question of interest. But whether he is trained in biomedical sciences is relevant to this discussion. With respect to Sivathamby's scholarship, I have to answer in the negative.

That the controversy of "what exactly constitutes an ethnic group" seems to remain unresolved mainly in the cultural anthropological circles is due to the fact that they depend on polygenic traits (skin color, face form etc.) for classification. But the exact mode of inheritance of these polygenic traits are not known yet. However, since World War II, biomedical scientists and geneticists have come out with genetically well defined characters such as blood groups, hemoglobin types, haptoglobins, transferrins and finger prints (dermatoglyphics) to classify the different ethnic groups.

There are many merits in using gene frequencies as the scale to measure the divergence of humans. They are more objective measures and they could be quantified as well.

(Continued on page 27)

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J.R. ON LANKA'S ENDLESS WARS

NEWS
BACKGROUND

Mervyn de Silva

President J. R. Jayewardena is a strategist of the classical school. If for Clausewitz war was an extension of politics by other means, for "J. R." the opposite may be true — politics is the continuation of war by different means. But politics has been his calling, and parliament his battleground for nearly half a century and this singularly uncommon experience has made a deep impression on what may be regarded as the natural cast of mind of a born militarist and strategist.

In conversations that took nearly 15 hours over a period of two months, it was not difficult to see the two personalities, sometimes in continuous collision, but frequently in near-perfect harmony.

"The mind of the opposing general", a recurring phrase, has its origin in Sun Tzu's classic work on "The Art of War". J. R. used it when we were discussing the S.L.F.P. in one of our initial exchanges at his Ward Place home, where a quick glance at the bookshelves — western classics, political biography (Churchill, de Gaulle) and many on India — hint at a more complex, perhaps even contradictory personality than the standard public image of a cold-blooded cynic committed solely to the ruthless pursuit of power. But the lawyer-cum-debater takes command once he is drawn into the thick of argument, and winning the point is the only immediate concern. The quick-witted reply clinches the argument, wins appreciative applause, and yet leaves behind the impression of a slick, evasive and practised adroitness.

For instance, his knowledge of Indian history, particularly

the British, pre-independence movements and personalities, may be matched only by some academic specialising in that period. But J. R., who many Sri Lankans may have reason to believe is deeply anti-Indian, talks about the Indian nationalist movement with unexpected passion and of its outstanding figures with the warmth and uncritical admiration of a school-boy.

Most of his reading on this was done in Jaffna where he served as private secretary to his father, a judge of the Supreme Court. "I think I must have read nearly all the books on India... what a beautiful library..."

"That's the library" I pointed out immediately, spitting an obvious opening to discuss the Tamil question and its acceleration to crisis proportions in the J. R. decade "that's the library, your chaps burnt down".

"But that's after I had finished reading all the books" he snapped back smartly, seemingly insensitive to the terrible consequences of that single act of vandalism by I.S.S. goon-squads despatched to Jaffna for the DDC polls.

"I have won every battle since I took charge of the party — 1977, the 1982 Presidential polls, the Referendum, the DDC elections, the parliamentary by-elections, the largest number under any government, the provincial council, the Presidential election of 1988, the general election... Democracy has been kept alive... that's the important thing... in this part of the world, only 2 countries have preserved democracy India and

Sri Lanka... unique even in the whole Third World... there must be elections... elections must be held... that is the only way to fight terrorism... terrorists who want to suppress democracy, personal liberties, fundamental rights... so many elections have been held... and my party has won them all... I have led my party to victory... from victory to victory... battle after battle..."

If the persistent choice of that single metaphor, politics as warfare, is a self-revealing lightning sketch of a dual personality (the militarist parliamentarian) it also has blurring effect, which tends to smudge the dividing line between form and content, the ritual ceremonies of democracy and its spirit.

UNP ARMY

The party is J.R.'s army. On that question, he has no doubts whatever. That is his greatest achievement, the revival and reorganisation of the UNP. April 1956 may have the supreme moment of triumph for the anti-UNP forces led by S.W.R.D.'s MEP but it also turned out to be J.R.'s finest hour. The UNP army was disintegrating; the commanders had surrendered, ordering the troops to do the same or run for cover. Defeated, demoralised, and dispersed, the UNP rank-and-file waited for a new voice, another leader.

J.R. got into his car and reported for work — at Sri Kothu, the party headquarters. "Not a dog was there" he says. Everybody had fled... even the peons. (President Premadasa recalls that the lights were still on and the fans working when he stepped into Sri Kothu for the first

J.R. SPEAKS

time after the "1956 Cultural Revolution"). With a mere handful — JR mentioned Sir Ekwarte, V. A. Sugathadasa and Jinnadasu Niyithapala — J. R. got down to re-organising the army of the 'Greens', to lick it into shape, to restore confidence, to modernise.

But the General of the historic 1956 "revolution" was soon to die, in a hail of bullets in his own home. A new leader was soon to emerge as the UNP's most formidable challenger — Mrs. Bandaranaike.

"How did you read the mind of the opposing general, the new one, Mrs. B.?" I asked.

"Mrs. B." he snorted. "Only a figurehead... Felix, Felix was the man... formidable... formidable..."

"And how does one deal with the opposing general in politics...?"

"Isolate, weaken, destroy..." was the softly spoken but cold and deliberate answer.

My last interview (June 24) began, inevitably, with the sensational news from Madras — the killing of the EPRLF leader and 12 others by a LTTE hit-squad. J. R. felt he was vindicated. He said:

"Now I can accuse them openly... now that Karunanidhi, the Chief Minister himself has publicly stated how M. G. Ramachandran and R. A. W. helped the LTTE separatists and terrorists. Mrs. Indira Gandhi always denied it. But now I can repeat the charge, India, you have helped these Tiger terrorists, you have helped them with money; you have helped them with weapons, with men, with training in your camps on your soil".

What follows is taken from notes kept by me of several conversations, usually lasting two-three hours, over a period of several months. I have not followed a strict sequence, guided more by the topicality of what was discussed as events moved,

Q: With Eelam War 2, the military operation in Jaffna is once more the focus of public attention. In early 1987, you ordered the army to take Jaffna...?

J.R. I asked the Security Chiefs to take Jaffna, after evacuating the civilians. Instead of taking Jaffna, the Army decided to take Vadamarachi. They did that. I asked them then a second time to take Jaffna.

Q: When was that?

J.R. In May/June 1987, after Vadamarachi. The first was in February 1987.

Q: Why did you pick that date?

J.R. I thought there would be less public outcry, demanding action against us at that time.

Legislators in Delhi were not gathering at that time. Public opinion and both its usefulness as support for the policy-maker as well as its constraints is part of Clausewitz's "Trinity of War", public, government and army. The veteran parliamentarian was doubtless conscious of such considerations.

J.R. I wanted the whole Jaffna operation finished in a short time. But the Military Chiefs argued strongly for Vadamarachi. But after Vadamarachi, General Ranatunga reported to me; to the Security Council and later to the Cabinet, the problems he faced. The casualty rate had been too high. He wanted four more battalions. There was a big problem of supplies; keeping the supply lines open; and the Air Force was then not ready to extend air support, after one plane was shot down.

Q: Did you have to accept that advice? As Supreme Commander you could...?

J.R. Yes, as Commander-in-Chief, I could take all military decisions, without consulting even the Cabinet... that was the case of the IPKF. — I took such decisions on my own... but here I needed full co-operation... Some suggested to put younger men in command but I decided not to take such a

drastic step... In the meantime, I was informed that the Indian Government would not let us take Jaffna... The Cabinet was also informed of this.

Q: Yes, the names of Mr. Dixit and Mr. Athulathmudali have been mentioned before was that a threat or a warning...? How did you interpret it?

J.R. It was neither. Militarily, I thought that India would intervene and help the terrorists with arms. A well known international magazine had also reported that India would intervene in such circumstances... In which case, we could not defeat them.

Q: Which magazine?

J.R. Lulith knows.

Q: In your Law College talk, you justified your request for Indian help and the arrival of IPKF by tracing the history of this country and pointing to the numerous instances when the Kings invited South Indian intervention... What was the point you were trying to make or emphasise?

J.R. There is no country, whether it was a monarchy or democracy, ancient or modern, that has not sought foreign help... Take Britain, the oldest parliamentary democracy as we understand the system today... didn't it appeal, didn't it plead and even beg the Americans to help... to come to the defence of England...? So did India in 1962 and U.S.A. sent bombers to be used against China and they stayed for 2 years.

Q: Wasn't that against a foreign foe... Hitler's Germany which had swept through Europe... the German army had already conquered so many lands in the history you spoke of the threat was internal, arising from disputes that were entirely domestic... England called for help to protect its freedom, sovereignty, independence, territory...

J.R. So did I. This was an equally deadly foe, seeking to destroy the same freedoms and impose a fascist dictatorship. The elected Government must

se safeguard its position, its power... that is the essence of politics... to acquire power democratically, to retain it, and if lost, to regain it. It was wisest to retain with the help of the devil, if necessary, rather than to lose and then seek to regain it.

Q: But there was no active danger to your power, the presidency...

J.R. Why not? The JVP with similar motives was active in the South. They tried to assassinate the democratic leaders. There was the danger of a coup. Some of the Foreign Diplomats had been approached by some Sri Lankans who had wanted to know their reactions. If there was a coup, they had all replied that they would support the elected President and Government. Their chief aim was to sound India, which stood solidly behind me.

Q: Was it Ronnie de Mel who told you that... because he told me on Galle Face Green, on our usual walks, that there was the danger of a civilian-military plot?

J.R. No. He said that there was no money to support the plan to take Jaffna and then the rest of the Peninsula and all-out war. He said he would have to remove subsidies, stop almost all development work, reduce salaries, impose strict exchange controls, stop tax concessions and so on. In that situation when I was told by Dixit, and later by Rajiv Gandhi himself that the LTTE and all other separatist groups were prepared to accept a North-East provincial council and lay down arms and enter the democratic system, the only problem I saw was the North-East merger. Since it was temporary, for one year, and there was to be a referendum, I seized the chance with both hands... why shouldn't I? The Bandaranaike-Chelvanayakam Pact offered a permanent merger... here it was for one year and the people of the East would decide to continue it or to separate... And for that concession, a temporary merger, would stop the killing, begin to

rebuild the country, with the colossal sum of money we would save, and the aid that we were promised for reconstruction... only a fool would reject such an offer... So, I say, only those who are against a temporary one year merger have the moral right to criticize the 'Accord'... nobody else... These and other concessions were approved at the earlier Party Meetings and tabled in Parliament in December 1986.

Q: Yes but it brought in Indian troops, 6,000, 12,000 and finally over 60,000...

J.R. That is because one party, the LTTE broke their word. That is when India could not do what it expressly pledged to do to disarm the LTTE... The whole time-table was sent to me by the Indian Prime minister after the LTTE had agreed to participate in implementing the Agreement and to surrender arms, and Prabhakaran himself had said that he would like to be in Jaffna personally to organise the surrender of weapons. The schedule was sent to me, starting August 2, arrival of IPKF, August 3, Indian army to fan out in all parts of the Jaffna peninsula, formal surrender ceremony... the meeting with the press and full T.V. coverage for Sri Lanka, India and the world... By August 5, if the LTTE failed to lay down arms, "The Indian army will move to disarm LTTE by force" said Rajiv. By force... you can read it for yourself... I showed it to the Cabinet... nobody objected.

Q: Nonetheless, it broke down in October 1987 — 3 months later, after some LTTE men had taken cyanide?

J.R. Yes, but I am sure that was only an excuse... these are terrorists...

Q: But Dixit told me that he had pleaded with you to have the interrogation of the captured 'Tigers' in Jaffna and that he would give an Indian air force plane to take all your investigators to where they were being held... Why didn't you accept that offer...?

J.R. I had to listen to my security officials...

Q: But, sir, you are the Commander-in-Chief and President, you don't have to listen to officials...? Or Ministers?

Anyway, I think they would have found some other excuse to break the Agreement... They have done so again with this Government.

Q: But it is also war, and surely the purpose of war is to achieve your fundamental political-national objectives...

J.R. Precisely, that is why I signed the Accord and invited the IPKF. Terrorists are special breed of men... it is different species... they do not follow the rules of war... and you can't follow them too...

Q: In short, "murgayo" (animals) eliminate them... your Kataragama speech...?

J.R. Precisely... it is a disease... they are a separate species.

Q: Isn't it precisely because of the IPKF that the 'murgayo' became so popular? After all recent paper articles show that the "patriotic" anti IPKF war had elite sympathisers and supporters even in upper-class families?

J.R. They were never popular. Their influence was the gun. No one moaned their passing away. Your patriotic peoples war... that is what they called it... did not produce one patriot who threw a stone at the IPKF... because they were cowards... but they know how to slit the throats of old women, mothers, even grandmothers of Sinhala soldiers... kill innocent workers... public servants who were doing their duty... those are your patriots...

Q: But they paralysed Colombo and nearly captured the capital?

J.R. Not after the emergency was declared and the army given full powers to wipe out these terrorists... whether Sinhalese or Tamil... these are terrorists... a peculiar breed... there is only one way to deal with them, and that was proved...

(To be continued)

In Parliament**Talked into a blind alley, then war**

Pence broker Shaul Hameed, Minister of Justice, told parliament that his talks with the Tigers had reached a blind alley, and the LTTE had violated the ceasefire. He was puzzled and sad at what had happened, the minister said. Mr. Hameed was speaking during the debate on the extension of the state of emergency.

The North-East problem could have been resolved if the talks continued, the minister said. The President had been determined to resolve this problem once and for all; he had spared no efforts. But an armed attack had been launched against the state.

"Some people say that the LTTE made use of the ceasefire to re-group and revamp. Some others maintain that it helped the government to send away the LKPF and bring the JVP under control. It also helped to bring other Tamil groups to the democratic mainstream. It paved the way for EROS to enter parliament. It also brought peace to the North East, though in a limited way, and the investors and the tourists started coming back to Sri Lanka. So there were the pros and cons", the minister said.

Mr. Ranjun Wijeratne, State Minister for Defence, said that the LTTE would have to lay down arms and agree to the government's terms if they wished to talk again. The LTTE had misjudged the government, and would have to pay dearly in the future, the minister said.

"I have blocked the Palk Straits and there is no escape for the

LTTE. They will have to die here," the minister said.

He said that the dialogue with the LTTE had enabled the government to send back the IPKF and deal with the JVP. The LTTE were bloody murderers. It was not Mr. Hameed who had failed but the LTTE. Just because the LTTE fought the IPKF they thought that they could outbeat the Sri Lanka security forces. One Sri Lanka soldier was equal to ten IPKF personnel in battle. That was where Prabhakaran and his cronies had misjudged the government.

Acting Opposition Leader Anura Bandaranaike said that that Sri Lanka was facing a civil war which might one day lead to a permanent division of the country, like Cyprus. Sri Lanka was on the brink of a catastrophe.

Mr. Bandaranaike said that the SLFP had time and again warned the government about the LTTE but the government had said that the SLFP was jealousy and wanted to swim in blood.

Just because the government gave them helicopters to travel about, accommodated them in five-star hotels, gave them free air tickets from Colombo to London, it could not expect the LTTE to be grateful. The LTTE was working towards fixed objective, they are working towards a separate state; they were fascists and bloody murderers, they would murder anybody to achieve their objective. They had not spared any who opposed their objective, Mr. Bandaranaike said.

Mr. Lulith Athulathudali, Minister of Education (and former minister of national security) said that he had studied the LTTE over the years; the LTTE did not speak for the Tamil but for itself. Prabhakaran stood for violence and did not understand others; the LTTE did not recognise any other elected representatives and claimed to be the sole representatives of the Tamil people. It was a fascist force.

Dr. Neville Fernando (SLFP — Kalutara District): What did you discuss with the LTTE? We are entitled to know. The people have a right to know.

Mr. Hameed: If the talks succeeded you would have known everything. There were no horse deals and it was not our intention to do anything behind the backs of the people. There could have been some arrangement for party leaders to be kept apprised of what was being discussed. That anyway should have been thought of earlier. Six months ago I tried to bring the SLFP and the UNP together and very nearly succeeded.

Mr. Stanley Tilokeratne, SLFP: Not to bring the SLFP and the UNP together but to bring a consensus between the two parties on certain key issues.

Mr. Hameed: I always stood for better understanding between parties and communities.

Why did the Tigers break the peace?

Ron Moreau in Sri Lanka (NEWSWEEK)

Murugesu Pandit, 35, is among the latest victims of Sri Lanka's ethnic war. A Tamil, she sobs as she sits in her modest, tin-roofed house in the village of Periyapattinam and sifts through the ashes of her belongings. A charred sewing machine is all that she can find. Her yard is strewn with empty shell casings and ammunition boxes left by Sri Lankan soldiers. Nearly every structure in the village—the post office, the school, shops and houses—has been gutted by fire. Tamil villagers fled before the troops arrived last week, so none of them actually saw what happened. But they are convinced the army set the fires as a reprisal against villagers suspected of supporting Tamil separatist guerrillas—the so-called Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE).

After a brief but hopeful three-month respite, Sri Lanka is back at war with itself. As recently as last March, an end appeared in sight to the island's ethnic and civil strife, which has claimed the lives of more than 10,000 people since 1983. The main conflict pits Sri Lanka's Buddhist Sinhalese majority, which comprises 75 percent of the island's 16 million people, against the predominantly Hindu Tamils, who are fighting for a separate homeland and make up about 18 percent of the population. (Muslims account for about 7 percent of the population.) Sri Lankan security forces had crushed the main Sinhalese terrorist group, JVP (Peoples Liberation Front) which had espoused total supremacy of the Sinhalese majority over Tamil and Muslim minorities. At the urging of Sri Lanka's President Ranasinghe Premadasa, the last contingent of the 40,000-man Indian Peace Keeping Force had gone home. The government in Colombo and the LTTE had declared a ceasefire, and were in the process of negoti-

ating a political solution. Then, two weeks ago the Tigers went on the offensive—and hopes for peace evaporated.

The trouble began when Police in Batticaloa arrested a Muslim and accused him of sleeping with the wife of a Sinhalese. The Muslim happened to be a tailor who had made uniforms for Tiger officers. Some 200 heavily-armed LTTE guerrillas soon surrounded Batticaloa's main police station and demanded that the tailor be set free. When police refused, the Tigers attacked, setting fire to the police station and taking most of the policemen prisoners. Within hours, Tiger guerrillas had attacked and captured some 30 police stations in the Eastern districts of Trincomalee, Batticaloa and Ampara. They made off with tons of police weapons and held more than 600 policemen hostage. Tiger guerrillas with mortars and rockets also laid siege to several Sri Lankan military camps in the North and East. The Sri Lankan army counterattacked, sending helicopter gunships and columns of troops to relieve the beleaguered military garrisons in the east and to retake the captured police posts. By last week, more than 500 people—civilians as well as combatants—had died in the latest round of fighting.

For the guerrillas, the Batticaloa incident apparently was just a pretext for a broad offensive. Tension had been mounting between the government and the Tigers for months. While the Tigers built bunkers, dug trenches, and planted mines, the army and police reinforced their garrisons. The fact that fresh fighting broke out was less surprising than the scale and timing of the guerrilla offensive. "The Tigers clearly had a premeditated plan to take over the North and East by force," said a foreign diplomat in Colombo.

"They were going for Tamil Eelam. Their independent homeland."

The Tamil guerrillas did most of the killing in the new round of warfare—in some cases with shocking brutality. According to some reports, the guerrillas executed more than 100 of the policemen they had captured. According to one policeman who escaped by playing dead, the Tigers blindfolded their prisoners, bound their hands and forced them to lie face down on the ground. Then they raked them with automatic weapons fire and finished each victim off with a single shot to back of the head. At the Tiger-controlled village of Pullumalai, a husky, 25-year-old guerrilla leader named Newton told *Newsweek* that the LTTE had indeed killed more than 100 police prisoners. But they had not been executed, he said. They had been gunned down, he claimed, as they tried to escape.

There were also atrocities against unarmed civilians. Last week, according to the Sri Lankan defense ministry, Tamil separatist guerrillas harked to death 62 Muslim men, women and children in Nintovar, a village 28 miles south of Batticaloa. Corpses were found floating inside water wells. The ministry said the guerrillas had accused the villagers of being government informants.

The Tiger offensive was a major setback for President Premadasa, who had hoped to use a 13-month ceasefire as the basis for fruitful negotiations with the LTTE. There had been grounds for optimism. Foreign Tourists had begun flocking back to the island's beach and mountain resorts, and there was even talk of renewed foreign investment. Premadasa had agreed in principle to key Tiger demands, including repeal of a constitutional amendment that outlaws the preaching of sepa-

Nights of panic — Fear is a constant

Steve Coll (Washington Post Service)

SIYAMBALANDUWA

War is raging again in Sri Lanka, as it has for seven years, and the conflict again is intense for this village of about 200 families, remote yet a crossroads of the conflicting parties.

Army convoys rumble past the hospital and the handful of shuttered shops at the center of town on their way to the war front, five miles (eight kilometers) to the east. Sinhalese refugees flow in the opposite direction in rickety trucks, with tables and chairs tied on top.

At night there is the sound of small-arms fire and the occasional thunder of a mortar attack.

The separatist guerrillas known as the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam have begun an offensive against Sri Lankan troops in the north and east of the island, and the government has responded with an offensive of its own. Cease-fire negotiations have failed and hundreds have died. Both sides appear prepared for a drawn-out war.

In Siyambalanduwa, collective paranoia has become a way of life. On a recent night, mass panic erupted.

"They are shooting! They are killing!" Farmers cried as they fled down dark paths toward the town center. In the aftermath spread a rumor that Tamil Tigers had entered the town and begun to massacre its ethnic Sinhalese residents.

Hundreds poured from their homes and plunged into the jungle, climbing trees or hiding in elephant grass. Patients at the local hospital, led by the town doctor, ripped intravenous drips from arms, climbed from their beds and ran.

And then — nothing. The night passed in silence. A false alarm, it turned out. Before dawn, police

and soldiers moved down the main street, calling into the jungle, "You can come out! There are no Tigers!"

The villagers who started the panic had mistaken a domestic squabble for the sounds of a massacre, the police said.

The mistake was understandable: guerrillas fight just to the east of town. Sinhalese revolutionaries plot their insurgencies within the town limits, and death squads roam the area in green jeeps, looking for suspected subversives of all kinds.

An estimated 200 people, or roughly one-fifth of Siyambalanduwa's population, have been killed in three years, according to local officials. Fifty more have disappeared, residents say.

The latest violence, after two months of relative calm, plays like the sequel to a movie whose title nobody can remember. This current war, between the government and the Tigers of Tamil Eelam, is distinct from the one four months ago, between the Tigers and the Tamil national army.

Before that was the one between the Tigers and the Eelam People's Revolutionary Liberation Front. And before that, the overlapping one between the Tigers and the Indian peacekeeping force, which started in 1987 and ended when the Indians went home in March.

The impact of so many wars on a place like Siyambalanduwa cannot be measured only by the numbers of people killed. It is compounded by the brutal form of the killings.

When the latest fighting began two weeks ago, for instance, Tiger guerrillas kidnapped an estimated 200 Sinhalese policemen stationed around the north and east.

In one incident, two survivors have reported that the guerrillas

tism. "To end the conflict and get the country back to normal," said a western diplomat in Colombo, "the government seemed willing to give the LTTE just about anything short of Tamil Eelam" — the independent state demanded by Tamil separatists. Premadasa had also ordered Sri Lanka's police and military to maintain a strictly defensive posture and to refrain from any moves that could provoke the guerrillas. "Premadasa deserves credit," said the diplomat. "He showed restraint and was determined not to be blamed for any recurrence of hostilities."

But the Tigers grew impatient at the pace of change. They chafed at Premadasa's unwillingness, or inability, to persuade the Sri Lankan parliament to quickly repeal the amendment against secessionism, and to disband the provincial council for the north and east that had been elected when the Indian peacekeepers controlled the area. Still, impatience did not fully explain why the Tigers launched their offensive. "They seem unreasonable and irrational," a Colombo-based diplomat suggested. "Logically they should not be fighting, but they are. And they are extremely good at it."

Now, neither side is talking peace. "This is the struggle for our homeland and we will win the struggle," said Newton, the Tiger officer. "There will be no more negotiations. We simply don't trust the Sri Lankan government." The government says it will not consider any cease-fire or talks until it has regained all the police posts and territory lost during the latest Tiger offensive. Sri Lankan defense minister Ranjan Wijeratne pledges a fight to the finish. "Now we are going to annihilate them," he says. "There is no turning back." The Tigers and the Sri Lankan army are each stronger and better armed than before. With both sides digging in, an end to Sri Lanka's bloody civil war is nowhere in sight.

blindfolded the policemen, herded them onto buses, drove them into the jungle, told them to lie face down on the ground, then sprayed them with automatic weapons fire.

More than 100 policemen may have died in the reported incident, which has not yet been confirmed by the discovery of bodies. They are said to have been burned in a jungle area controlled by the Tigers.

Many Sri Lankan military officers and police officials assume that the Tigers of Tamil Eelam have killed the hundreds of other captured police, although the rebels have denied killing any policemen.

In Siyambalanduwa, the story of the reported massacre — with gruesomely vivid details about how the supposed executions were carried out — is repeated among the townspeople like some torturous mantra.

Several of the policemen supposedly executed were residents of Siyambalanduwa. But the story seems to be repeated often partly because it helps some residents clarify the rage and fear that dominate their lives.

"Now my son is gone," said the mother of a policeman presumed killed in the jungle massacre. "I have no reason to be afraid anymore. There is no place to go anymore. There is no security. Now I will just stay here until they kill me."

As the town continues to fracture, mirroring the disintegration of Sri Lanka's once hominid, gentle, and literate society, many residents of Siyambalanduwa find it difficult to sustain a sense of humor. Some 50 families have given up entirely, packing their belongings and leaving town.

Still, for most residents, who lack the money and connections to emigrate as many of the island's educated elite have done, Siyambalanduwa looks to be about as safe as anywhere else.

A rice farmer said, "Actually, we are all too scared to stay here. The problem is, we have nowhere else to go."

Fearful symmetry

Manik de Silva in Colombo

Fierce fighting in Sri Lanka's minority Tamil-dominated northeast which left at least 600 people, including 300 police and soldiers, dead in seven days has enmeshed the country in a renewed civil war. Declaring a full-fledged war on the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE), Minister of State for Defence Ranjan Wijeratne promised to "flatten" the Tigers. This bellicose tone was echoed by President Ranasinghe Premadasa, who despite having sought to defuse the crisis until the last moment, warned that an intransigent LTTE would face the same fate as the Sinhalese subversives his forces smashed last year.

For Premadasa, the LTTE attacks on police stations since 10 June which triggered the confrontation, were a bitter blow. He had taken great political risks to secure the withdrawal of the Indian Peace Keeping Force — which had fought the Tigers under the 1987 Indo-Sri Lanka peace accord — after Indian military pressure forced the LTTE to the negotiating table in Colombo early last year. Then, despite strident warnings that he was dealing with a self-serving and untrustworthy group, he negotiated for more than a year with the LTTE to resolve the country's long festering ethnic conflict.

Even as these talks were under way a series of Tiger provocations — including what appeared to be a clear LTTE arms build-up — was glossed over by Colombo until early this month when the Tigers attacked police stations in the eastern Batticaloa and Ampara districts. Within three days 20 police stations had been overrun and hundreds of policemen captured. As reports that nearly 200 of these men had been massacred reached Colombo and service commanders pressured their political masters for orders to crush

the Tigers, Premadasa made a last-ditch effort to secure peace.

Justice Minister Shahul Hameed was flown twice to Jaffna for talks with the LTTE hierarchy. A ceasefire to be effective at noon on 15 June was first negotiated, but that truce barely held. Hameed went back to Jaffna on 16 June and a second ceasefire, effective the same day was announced — but there was no let up in armed clashes.

The first advantages were clearly with the LTTE. Even though Colombo had planned to fill the security vacuum, zone by zone, as Indian troops pulled out, the LTTE was able to persuade the government to minimise the Sri Lankan military presence. The LTTE was permitted to deal with its Tamil rivals, principally the India-backed and armed Eelam People's Revolutionary Liberation Front (EPRLF) which won the north-eastern provincial elections last year.

The LTTE had boycotted those elections and tried to wreck them. Soon after the Indian pullout early this year, the LTTE — with Colombo's tacit approval — quickly smashed its Tamil rivals. Most of the EPRLF cadres fled to the neighbouring Indian state of Tamil Nadu. On 19 June at least 13 leaders of EPRLF were killed in Madras, the Tamil Nadu capital, by Tiger supporters.

The reasons why the LTTE chose to launch the recent attacks on police stations are not yet clear. Some analysts believe the LTTE had hoped that capturing the police stations and killing policemen would ensure that police officers not loyal to the Tigers would refuse to serve in the northeast, the Tigers would then have been able to demonstrate their popular support at fresh elections for the region contemplated by Colombo.

Continued on page 17

THE PRIO REPORT

Neville Jayaweera

Our interviewees attributed the dramatic turn around of the Sri Lankan situation to a whole range of factors, ranging from the empirical to the non-empirical. We set them out below though not necessarily in order of the importance attached to them by the interviewees.

India

Over the preceding twelve months, within India, perceptions of the Sri Lankan situation had metamorphosed. As the IPKF's offensive against the LTTE stalled, and as the casualties and the costs began to mount, public euphoria turned to disenchantment and blatant hostility. The India national press had kept up a steady drum beat of criticism against Rajiv Gandhi's ill-conceived military adventure. (1) The trends were rapidly brought to a head, on the one hand by Rajiv Gandhi's defeat at the polls, and on the other by Karunanidhi's ascendancy in Tamil Nadu. Venkat Pratap Singh who took over from Gandhi had no sympathy whatsoever for the latter's Sri Lankan adventure and within 48 hours of being sworn in as Prime Minister announced his decision to bring the IPKF back at the earliest opportunity. Karunanidhi Tamil Nadu's new Chief Minister had likewise never concealed his hostility to the presence of the IPKF in Sri Lanka. He accused the Indian Army of killing off more than 5000 Tamils in Jaffna, and refused even to meet the last contingent of the retreating IPKF as it ceremonially disembarked in Madras. (2) Furthermore, Karunanidhi had set himself up as the patron of the LTTE and intervened actively to bring about an understanding between rival and warring Tamil factions in Jaffna, as an impetus to the withdrawal of the IPKF.

So, the internal dynamics of Indian politics had already set the scene for the withdrawal of its troops from Sri Lanka.

EPRLF

Among the vast majority of the Tamils, at least of Jaffna, the EPRLF administration had always been seen as a puppet, a quiescent regime kept in place by the IPKF. The manner and circumstances of its election to power had from the very beginning destroyed its credibility. Although Chief Minister Perumal himself and many of his Cabinet members were held in high esteem as "good" persons, the EPRLF administration never put down roots. With Premadasa's assumption of the Presidency, as Colombo turned increasingly hostile towards the IPKF, Perumal's regime buttressed as it was by the IPKF, naturally suffered from the fall out. When Delhi signaled its intentions to withdraw the IPKF, it became clear that EPRLF's demise would not be far behind. The latter's ill conceived action to conscript a 3000 strong army, the Tamil National Army, (whose average age was around 16 years) armed and supplied by the IPKF, only served to further undermine their position. With support from India evaporating rapidly, and the popular support within the North East Province itself shrinking, the EPRLF's exit was inevitable.

So, the scene was set for some other force to fill the power vacuum in the North East Province.

LTTE's Return

Premadasa's decision to open negotiations with the LTTE, and his tacit recognition of their claim to be the Tamil people's most authentic representatives, coincided with the metamorphosis of

Excerpt from the report presented to the recent OSLO conference on Sri Lanka. The author, who was Coordinator of the the project on behalf of the Peace Research Institute, OSLO, spent three months in Sri Lanka to prepare this report. He was former Chairman, Sri Lanka Broadcasting Corporation.

perceptions in India and the progressive decline of EPRLF credibility in Jaffna. Actually, they were inter dependent factors mutually reinforcing each other. The question is asked everywhere, would the LTTE, for all its resilience, its fighting prowess and dedication, have ever re-emerged to be the dominant political force among the Tamils, were it not for the patronage extended to them by Premadasa. The backing that Colombo gave to the LTTE more than merely breathed a new life into them. It was also the signal to the other Tamil militant groups that they could not survive any longer as rivals against the LTTE. So, policies and perceptions in Delhi, Madras and Colombo harmonised to eliminate from the scene all warring factions, bar the most powerful and the most dreaded among them, the LTTE. The three capital cities established (Delhi, unwillingly, but Madras and Colombo, deliberately) the undisputed hegemony of the LTTE over the North East Province of Sri Lanka. The time is not far away when we shall be able to see to what extent that hegemony, established for the present through external patronage and the force of arms, will be endorsed democratically by the voters of the North East Province.

Intervention

It was President Premadasa's unequivocal and implacable hostility towards the presence of for-

sign troops on Sri Lankan soil that catalysed the forces enumerated above. Neither Pratap Singh's election to office in Delhi, nor the ascendancy of Karunanidhi in Madras, nor the decline of EPRLF's credibility in Jaffna, nor the LTTE's resiliency and enormous capacity to fight back, could by themselves, individually or cumulatively have been sufficient to produce the dramatic turn around in the affairs of the North. It was Premadasa's intervention carried four thrusts. First, he preemptively ordered Delhi to withdraw its troops. Delhi did not comply as ordered, but read the signals correctly and negotiated a face saving exit. Second, he indicated to the EPRLF that in his mind they were a puppet regime and had no real mandate to negotiate a settlement on behalf of the Tamils. Third, he recognised that a settlement of the Tamil problem could never be forged while excluding the LTTE. Fourth, and this perhaps was the overriding consideration, his principal target was the Sinhala South. In order to establish his position in the South, he had to evict the Indians from the North, and in evicting the Indians, the LTTE was a necessary ally.

Hence the catalysing of disparate and even contradictory forces to produce, at least for the time being and for the first time in 17 years, an end to fighting in the Tamil territories of North East Sri Lanka.

Tamil weariness

An important factor in the abatement of violence, as recounted to us by almost all the Tamils whom we interviewed, was the great weariness that had overtaken the people of the North East; weariness with 17 years of conflict and violence; weariness with having to live endlessly amidst tension and under the constant fear of sudden death; loss of properties and businesses; the dispersal of families over the face of the globe; the breakdown of kinship networks and value systems and the supplanting of a traditional and conservative culture by a gun-toting and militaristic one; all of these factors worked cumulatively and contributed towards the transforma-

tion which we are witnessing today.

South

Simultaneously, a similar weariness seems to have overtaken the Sinhala South. Without exception every one of the interviewees from the South spoke of the overwhelming sense of weariness and impatience with the violence and conflict. The Sinhala people seemed weary of conflict both in the North and in the South. Somehow the realisation seemed to have dawned at last among the mass of the Sinhala people, at least according to the majority of the Sinhala interviewees, that the two conflicts were in fact one, that the conflict centering on the JVP owes its origin ultimately to the unresolved conflict in the North, and that unless the conflict with the Tamil people is somehow brought to a conclusion and peace and amity restored quickly, Sinhala interests in the South will continue to deteriorate. There are of course still several pockets of Sinhala hegemonistic thinking, but their ascendancy seemed to us, at least for the time being, definitely blunted. The retreat of Sinhala hegemonism was therefore an important factor in the transformation we are talking about.

Onslaught on JVP

Perhaps the single most visible factor in hastening the transformation under consideration, was the ferocious onslaught that the military, police and vigilantes' combine launched against the JVP, between August and December 1989.

Actually the power of the JVP as a social movement was highly exaggerated. At no stage in its history, either in 1971 or in the '80s, was it a mass movement in the sense that it had been able to persuade the mass of the people voluntarily to support it. We shall discuss later on in this report the JVP phenomenon in some depth. At this stage it is only necessary to point out that its lack of a mass base in the country rendered the JVP highly vulnerable to the direct assault launched against it by the security forces.

Within four months of launching its offensive, the military had wiped out the entire politburo and the central committee of the JVP. By the end of December '89 the JVP had ceased to exist, both as a political structure and as a movement. This is not to say that the grounds for the popular discontent which the JVP exploited had been removed or even mitigated, but lacking a mass base in the country, once the top leadership was removed, the "movement" as a whole simply disintegrated.

The awesome power of the JVP as demonstrated during the period of June to November 1989, derived basically from two sources.

One, the obvious source, was its use of terror. Through a selective and systematic application of terror it had demonstrated its ability to shut down at will the transport services, the hospital services, the public services both in Colombo and down to the smallest village level offices, the export and import and wholesale and retail trade, the production of tea in the plantations, and all schools throughout the island. All this power derived primarily from the "barrel of a gun".

The other source of JVP power during this period was President Premadasa's willingness to wait for the JVP to respond to his overtures to them, and the latter's gross misinterpretation of this offer as evidence of Premadasa's weakness and ineffectiveness. From the time that Premadasa assumed the Presidency in January 1989, he made overtures to the JVP and LTTE, and as a demonstration of his sincerity, granted an amnesty to all rebels, declared that there were no "wanted" men amongst them, and, contrary to the advice of his military and police, in fact much to their dismay and chagrin, proceeded to lift the Emergency. By March '89, he went further. He offered to make constitutional provision to enable the rebel groups to be nominated to Parliament.

The LTTE, after a reasonable waiting period, during which they tested Premadasa's sincerity, res-

ponded and entered into negotiations with him. The total rehabilitation and undisputed ascendancy of the LTTE in the Tamil areas, has been the outcome of those negotiations.

However, in the South, the JVP misread Premadasa and exaggerated their own strength. Not only did they think that Premadasa did not mean what he said, but actually believed that he was a "paper tiger", that he was ineffective and that he could not manage the emerging crisis. Also they believed that the countryside was now "liberated" and the capital city, Colombo "encircled". It was now only a matter of time before the armed forces would also break out in a mutiny, and total power would then be theirs.

Things did not work out like that. While Premadasa waited, and the JVP appeared to go from strength to strength and the government from vacillation to abdication, the security forces were busy gathering intelligence. During the waiting period, while the JVP grew over-confident and therefore more and more exposed to intelligence gathering by the security forces, the latter were busy tracking down their identities, whereabouts, networks and communication links.

Finally, when Premadasa, under pressure from his security chiefs decided in June 1989 to re-impose the Emergency and asked the forces to go over to the offensive, the JVP leadership and structure disintegrated rapidly.

The dramatic disintegration of the JVP and its disappearance from the political scene suddenly removed the single biggest pressure on the Sri Lanka polity and enabled its reintegration in short order.

Private sector

The growth of the private sector during the preceding decade enabled Sri Lanka in a paradoxical sort of way to survive the traumas inflicted by the JVP during the '87 - '89 phase of its ascendancy, and return rapidly to normalcy. In a paradoxical sort of way because, on the one hand, as many

analysts of Sri Lankan problems claim, it was the spread of capitalism, represented by the burgeoning private sector, that had quelled the rise of the JVP. On the other hand it was precisely the dispersal of the production, distribution and marketing networks, transport and banking and the wholesale and retail trade, that imparted to the economy a degree of resilience that enabled it to absorb the JVP assault, and yet survive. The absence of mono-lithic and mega-systems of economic activity — such as a single cooperative wholesale and retail system for the marketing of commodities, or a single banking network, or a single road transport system, made people less dependent, and society less vulnerable to the kind of immobilisation that the JVP was able to inflict. When the JVP closed down the Transport Board, in spite of exposure to violence, hundreds of privately run buses still plied. When government retail outlets closed down, the small retailer still engaged in commerce through a back door. And immediately the terror let up, the private sector whose dominant motive was the resumption of commerce, of course primarily in order for it to survive, quickly bounced back into business, enabling there to flow again, even though at inflated prices.

So the return to normalcy was not dragged out and was surprisingly rapid.

Premadasa phenomenon

In my view, and in the view of a large number of interviewees even of the "oppositional and dissident" category, perhaps the single most crucial factor in Sri Lanka's ability to survive the traumas of '89 and regain cohesion so rapidly, was the "Premadasa phenomenon".

In a way, and to a degree, not seen in any Sri Lankan leader this century, Premadasa has been the catalyst par excellence, a veritable melting pot of the major socio-cultural and political formations in the country. On the face of it, this seems a somewhat extravagant claim. But let us look at

it seriously, because it is central to our analysis, and to our reading of Sri Lanka's prospects over the next decade.

First, and most importantly, Premadasa has been the most authentic "Sinhala-Buddhist" Head of State/Head Government this country has had. We can make this point most effectively by quoting Harsha.

Navaratne, the field Director of Sarvodaya, himself a passionate Sinhala-Buddhist, who during the past 20 years has worked literally in almost every village in Sri Lanka and who, if he chose to contest, is popularly said to be able to win any one of at least twenty parliamentary electorates, said

Navaratne, in an interview with us, (incidentally, he is not entirely at fault with (Premadasa) — "Premadasa is the first Head Of State we have had whose Sinhala-Buddhism is not a mere political convenience. He thinks Sinhala-Buddhism, he dreams Sinhala-Buddhism and he talks Sinhala-Buddhism. He knows what the Sinhala-Buddhists want. Although he does not agree with Sinhala-Buddhists who think that this country belongs only to them, and even though he is prepared to say so publicly and defend the rights of minorities, the Sinhala-Buddhists will not consider him a traitor. He is one of us. He will not betray us."

Second, the foregoing notwithstanding, no national leader has won the confidence of the minorities, both ethnic and religious, especially of the Tamils of the North-East as well as of the plantations, to such an extent and so quickly, as Premadasa. For the first time since Independence there is almost a consensus among all minorities that they can trust this man for someone who is so blatantly Sinhala Buddhist, that is indeed a remarkable achievement. Premadasa has thereby almost achieved the impossible feat of bringing into some equilibrium forces hitherto thought to be irreconcilable.

Third, he is an unmitigated "free marketer." His economics is basically the growth economics of capitalism, but yielding to the dominant populism of the past 50 years, which is hostile to the ideology of "capitalism," he is careful not to call himself a "capitalist," preferring instead to describe his economics as "economic democracy". By whatever name he calls it, quite clearly his economics is acceptable to big business, to the wholesaler and small retailer, to the contractor, to the petit and national bourgeoisie, and above all, to the foreign investor.

Fourth, he is at the same time the archetypal "populist", constantly harking back to the "people", the workers and the peasants, to the "grass roots" with whom he identifies easily and whose interests he claims to place at the centre of his political agenda.

So he has, at one and the same time, reconciled the clamour for "growth" with the demand for "equity".

There is however one socio-economic formation which does not fully accept him, and which

would rather do without him, if they could — viz. the grantees of his own party, the old landed class, and the feudal elements of both the UNP and the SLFP. However, they need him more than he needs them, for he is their only and last bulwark against the rising tide of revolution.

The Premadasa phenomenon is then, basically this genius for reconciling and holding together antagonistic socio-cultural-political interests, and the ability to impart to them an equilibrium which they inherently lack. As for how long he will be able to continue doing this is entirely another matter, for it is contingent on a number of variables over which he may have little control. At this point it is only necessary to recognise that Premadasa's extraordinary capacity to reconcile contradictions was a crucial factor in Sri Lanka's capacity to survive lacerating experiences of 1989.

The image that comes to mind is of Plato's charioteer, who has to rein in and direct towards a goal he alone has in mind, four spirited horses, all wanting to charge off in diffe-

rent directions. Except that Premadasa has to hold together not just four but at least a dozen wild horses and worse, the chariot wheels under him (i. e. the economy) seem buckled and in need of urgent replacement.

Cautionary word

The foregoing paragraphs attempt to evaluate Premadasa's role in the specific context of Sri Lanka's recovery from the brink, and in maintaining the prevailing peace. They seek to assess Premadasa as a factor in the concrete conjuncture of socio-political forces operating within the country today. However they are not an assessment of Premadasa the 'person' or Premadasa the 'President'. We did not see that within the mandate of our fact-finding mission, such an assessment was necessary or practical. However, we did seek an interview with him, and obtained from him his responses, to a whole range of issues which several of our interviewees raised with us. We are grateful to him for the frankness and the comprehensiveness of his replies.

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JVP: Terrorist insurgency, not popular insurrection

Eduardo Marino

From events let us turn to principles. Let us

"... confront the logic of militant groups whose chosen method of political struggle is violence. The issues which arise here are different, in certain important respects, from those which relate to state violence. Governments which are elected within the parliamentary democratic framework claim to adhere to political principles that exclude arbitrary violence. When they resort to illegal terror, one may argue with them on the basis of their professed principles. But militant groups make no secret of the fact that violence is their means, and that they hold this to be the necessary way of changing society.

"Militant groups in fact present themselves in the aura of a historical tradition of revolution as an act of liberation. France and the world are commemorating the bicentenary of a great revolution, and the Russian and Chinese Revolutions, and yet others after them, all make the same appeal to our faith in the right of people to overthrow unjust and oppressive rulers. Whether everything that happened in those revolutions was desirable can be questioned. But, with whatever qualifications, the liberating character of the great revolutions has to be recognised — not least, in their capacity to reassert and regenerate themselves after a period of reaction. How then can we take the position that violence in all forms and in all circumstances is to be condemned? Or must we, on the other hand, concede the claim of militant groups that when-

ever violence is committed in the name of liberation, it has to be accepted as justified?

"... on this specific question of violence, there is a great deal that is valid and useful in the thinking of the classical Marxists, and that can guide us in making a judgement about violence of militant groups today.

"The classical Marxists made a clear distinction between popular revolutions in which the broad masses intervene to overthrow the existing state, and all forms of coups, putches and conspiracies in which an organised minority acts to take control of the state into its own hands. They also distinguished between the methods used in one and the other form of overthrowing the state. Mass agitation, demonstrations and other actions involving popular participation, the mass uprising, are revolutionary forms; terrorist acts, such as explosions of bombs in public places, sabotage and assassination of individuals, are the work of groups seeking to substitute themselves for the people as the agents of change. This doesn't mean that in popular revolutions people acted with pure spontaneity; they were always organised and led. But people in the mass don't rise unless it is clear to them that they have no other means of changing their condition. This is the moral justification of the violence of a popular revolution when it occurs: that the masses, by their action, have shown that they have no other way out. But when a minority, determined and ruthless as it may be, seeks by its own terror and violence to change society, with the people

as onlookers, then we must ask not only, Does the end justify the means? but also the question, Do the means lead to the end? If the end is liberation — which, if anything, must signify a freer, more just and humane society — can this be achieved by planting bombs regardless of whom they may kill, by massacring defenceless and innocent civilians... or by eliminating those who are in a different political camp, and even wiping out their families? The practice of this indiscriminate and unrestrained violence coarsens and brutalises those who participate in it, those who order it and those who carry it out, and if they come to power, it will leave its stamp on the society they create. What kind of society can that be except a regimented one, run by a political leadership freed of popular control in which all dissent will be ruthlessly stamped out?

"... everything we have gone through in the last decade confirms the wisdom of those who ruled out assassination as a legitimate method of pursuing liberation of any kind. You may start by killing unpopular politicians or oppressive agents of the state, and claim that their killing is just retribution for their crimes, and perhaps few people will shed tears for the victims. But once you have started on this slippery slope, there is no possibility of stopping anywhere. You will go on eliminating police informants and feel justified again. But you won't stop there because you have already convinced yourself that the sacred end of liberation justifies the killing

of anybody who is an obstacle in the way. And you are also certain that you and your group possess the only right formula for achieving liberation. The combination of complete certainty of your infallibility and total ruthlessness with regard to your means is a terrifying thing. So, armed with this logic, you will go on to kill even members of other parties or groups who claim to be working for the same ends but are doing so (according to you) by the wrong methods. But you won't stop there either. Because by the same logic, even those who disagree with you in our own group are traitors to the cause and must therefore be eliminated. And there is no reason to suppose that this process will end with the seizure of power. What it prepares the way for is a society of permanent purges, torture chambers and execution camps".

From 'Violence & Human Rights', The Revolutionary Lecture, by Reggie Siriwardena, (Colombo, 19 June 1989).

In the North, the East, Centre, and the South diverse groups have claimed to be acting on behalf of the masses in their pursuance of violent policies. But the result of years of violence on all sides has, if anything, proved that violence does not achieve the ends, let alone that the masses find it justifiable as means.

In preceding pages, this report has addressed these questions. It has referred to instances of government or government-connived repression over the years of non-violent manifestations of political and social protest and opposition. It has mentioned the existence of government and government-party business patronage with corrupting and demoralising effects most visible in the villages. It has also referred to the control and censorship of most public media by the state. In the final pages, the appendices to this

report include reference to reported government interference in the electoral process including fraud — yet another way of transcribing on the peaceful expression of popular will. There is thus no doubt about the determination of the LNP to remain in power at almost any cost.

Without democratic checks, such a mixture of authoritarian conduct ('we have democratic power to do anything' then-President Jayawardene has been quoted as saying in account of the LNP parliamentary majority), corrupting patronage, censorship and electoral malpractices, invites reactive violence on the part of many Sri Lankans outside the government and the party-in-government. But the fact is that — insofar as the South is concerned — only a minority has chosen to act or react violently: the JVP/DJV leadership. True, they have a large following, perhaps the largest following among the young in the South including Colombo. Equally true, the opposition violence of the last two years in the South has not been the work of the JVP members en masse, that is, it has not been a popular insurrection. The actions have been those of the JVP/DJV leadership, that is, it has been a terrorist insurgency. In addition, to the extent that the JVP/DJV killing campaign has been directed against their unarmed political rivals and opponents on the anti-government side, it acquires the traits of vendetta-terror. Finally, when they attack government targets, there are grounds for considering the JVP/DJV campaign and armed rebellion against and in resistance to, the state or the government.

In sum, the JVP/DJV violence 'in defence of the Motherland' and in favour of 'social revolution' has been a mixture of terrorist insurgency against non-combatants; vendetta-terror against unarmed political rivals and their families; armed rebellion against and in resistance to, a militarised government.

On the Police

"I will explain it to you in a nutshell," said the Deputy Superintendent of Police at Southern headquarters in Matara one morning in September 1988. He proceeded:

"This is a straightforward problem of terrorism we have to deal with. We have been ordered by the government to finish it as soon as possible. The problem is about 30 or 40 fellows at the core of the thing; they plan and carry out the assassinations. The rest are youngsters who follow them. These 30 or 40 fellows know the terrain well and are highly mobile. Besides, we have learnt that, resembling the Tigers in the North, they apply the organisation pattern of cells of three, whereby each one, in a pyramid, liaises with only two others. Thus, their mobility and form of organisation make it difficult for us to catch them all. We have, therefore, to open our arms widely and have much bigger catches than we would like to have, in order to screen and obtain the co-operation of many aiming to spot the few. This is what police forces do in similar circumstances around the world. Here is when, unfortunately but inevitably, some innocent people get hurt... The fact is that some talk... That we are harsh? Sometimes we have to be so. There are some who refuse to give us information, we have to put pressure on them and when this is not enough we have to break them..."

Researcher: "And how do you distinguish those who have no information to give from those withholding information? You can break someone and still learn nothing, simply because there is nothing to learn from him".

Superintendent: "I have accepted that some innocent people may get hurt — is this our fault or that of the terrorists we must identify? In general

our experience has taught us to make distinctions among people. Perhaps you will accept that someone like me, with almost 30 years of experience as a policeman, has learnt something about people... If we have to be harsh with some people, it is because it is our duty to protect the people at large..."

Researcher: "The people I have met in the villages are all frightened by you, especially on account of your overnight operations when you go and take people out from their homes and those taken never come back or are not found anywhere... How can the people feel protected?"

Superintendent: "Look, let's be plain about people being frightened. Everyone is frightened here including the police! Do you think that I can send any one of my men out into the roads on his own? I must send them always in a group and motorised. And when their morale is very low I used to go ahead myself, to move my men by example, across the villages, by foot, with no more than one or two men protecting my back a few meters behind. I know I can be ambushed anywhere at any moment. I have a family to take care of like everyone else... It is our duty to patrol the villages. The army is ready to assist us. Responsibility remains ours... Now, excuse me, you have had the time you asked for. Go and write whatever you want, with one condition: write only the truth".

Indeed, in a 'nutshell' some of the worst expressions of the problem, in the words of a seasoned front-line professional, are clearer and more direct than the rhetoric of politicians in the capital city and diplomats abroad. In fact, the police themselves acknowledge the massive arbitrary arrests, namely those "bigger catches than we would like to have"; the use of torture and occurrence of

deaths in custody, namely when "we have to break them".

However, there is no unanimity in the security forces about the effectiveness of such personnel-screening and fact-finding techniques. Within hours of listening to the Southern police commanding officer, the field researcher learnt the views of a high military authority:

"If you can only catch a terrorist after killing 20 other people, the whole operation is counter-productive. In 99.9% of operations this is what happens... my approach is hearts-and-minds..."

Colonel Ranjan de Silva, former Southern Commander and Coordinating Officer for Galle district, as reported by "The Independent", London, 13 January 1988

Both the ruthless and the hearts-and-minds approaches to the insurgency challenge find advocates inside as well as outside the security forces. Who is right? Those whose prescription and practice is to break the suspects in order to spot the militants or those whose policy is to gain the support of the innocent to isolate the culpable?

There is a specialised counter-subversive unit (CSU) in virtually every police station in the South. There are a number of police stations where the CSU has actually become one with the station as a whole. By definition, the CSU's mandate is single-targeted: 'eradication of subversives'. In theory, the police are supposed to continue dealing, as well, with non-political crime and with petty crimes in general. In practice, the campaign of violence by the JVP/DJV has been absorbing almost all the police resources. Not only self-defence but also pre-emptive and revenge killings by government and UNP supporters are, in practice, deemed to be part of the anti-subversive effort and, as such, are not only tolerated but abetted by the CSUs. The police/CSU operatives in the South

have, thus, found an emergency law-enforcement rationale — to eliminate insurgent terrorists — and an unlawful, often criminal, political function — to eliminate potential insurgents and terrorists, together with their associates who often include relatives.

The police are supposed to be nothing more or less than law enforcers. Therefore, the questions are twofold: whether the law is good or bad and whether it is enforced well or wrongly. Today, the police failing in Sri Lanka results from a combination of well-enforced bad law with violations of good law. To escape this predicament, a combination of law and law-enforcement reform is called for.

For the last 10 years, the anti-terrorist legislation and other emergency laws have been subject not only to criticism but also to condemnation by qualified experts and authorities both in the country and internationally:

"... the Prevention of Terrorism Act 1979 infringes many of Sri Lanka's obligations under the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights... besides being counter-productive by evoking greater support for terrorists, it has also proved manifestly useless as a measure for catching them; some of its provisions would be an ugly blot on the statute book of any civilised country... Emergency Regulation 15A is a dangerous and obnoxious measure, and should be revoked as soon as possible; if the Secretary of Defence conducts any more inquiries into deaths at the hands of members of the security forces under it, he should publish his findings and the material on which he makes them. Detainees should be given access to relatives and lawyers... No further legislation which would place the security forces beyond the reach of the ordinary law should be introduced..."

From 'A Mounting Tragedy of Errors' report of a mission to

Sri Lanka by Paul Sieghart, International Commission of Jurists, Geneva/London, 1984

Some of the main provisions of the Prevention of Terrorism Act (PTA) and other emergency regulations are — in the light of human rights — the bad law which the police are instructed by government and Parliament to enforce. It may not legalise torture and arbitrary killing. Experience and evidence show that the PTA abuses gross abuse of police power by deliberately leaving room for police methods which Sri Lankan constitutional law and international law explicitly prohibit.

The issues in question have for years been spelt out by Sri-Lankan professionals and they have not been refuted by the authorities. In a public call addressed to all presidential candidates, the Civil Rights Movement (CRM) asked them:

"What measures will you take to remedy the evil of torture and death in custody and 'disappearances'? Will the steps you take include all or any of the following?

"(a) The creation and wide publication of rules having the force of law governing treatment, conditions of detention and interrogation of all suspects, and notification of their families.

"(b) The authority interrogating a person should not be the same as the authority responsible for his custody. No person should be held at the mercy of his interrogators.

"(c) Independent machinery for the supervision of interrogation.

"(d) Independent machinery for handling complaints against the police.

"(e) The normal law relating to inquests to apply to all deaths in custody.

"(f) Repeat or revocation of the provisions of the Prevention of Terrorism Act and emergency regulations that create conditions conducive to

torture. (For example, admissibility of confessions; by passing of Prison Rules; prolonged police custody).

"(g) Reorganisation of the police force with special emphasis on training, discipline and police/public relations.

"(h) Law and practice relating to detention, custody and interrogation in emergency situations to be kept under review by a non-partisan expert body to ensure that the needs of national security are not used to negate basic human rights.

From 'A Call for Commitment to Civil Liberties', CRM, Colombo, November 1988

Arbitrary killing by the security forces demands public exposure and condemnation. It has had the most pernicious effects: the provision which authorises the security forces to dispose of dead bodies without inquest, without identification, away from relatives or anyone else. In practice, it has induced murder by the security forces.

On the other hand, there is — in the light of human rights — the good law the police have too often ignored. The Sri Lanka government has obligations under its own Constitution: "Article 13 (4) — No person shall be punished with death... except by order of a competent court, made in accordance with procedure established by law...", as well as international law, namely Article 6 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights guaranteeing the right to life about which the Human Rights Committee — the body created by the Covenant to monitor the implementation of the Covenant's provisions by state parties — has stated:

"The deprivation of life by the authorities of the state is a matter of the utmost gravity. Therefore, the law must strictly control and limit the circumstances in which a person may be deprived of his life by such authorities".

UN documentation, Criminal Justice Division, Vienna, 1980s

From time to time, police officers acknowledge their duty to act according to some professional standards:

"Our instructions to all officers are to act with great restraint and to achieve peace through peaceful means. It's only when all attempts fail, that the police try to disperse such crowds. First, the police will make a calm and kind appeal. When that fails, they use tear gas. When that too fails, and shops and houses are attacked, and innocent people are killed, and property is damaged, the police are forced to take stern action. What's the result? Lives are lost. When a life is lost this handful of saboteurs will cash in on this unfortunate situation and escalate the turmoil...

"We treat all those in custody with compassion. We don't allow them to be harmed. We are engaged in the maintenance of law and order. But sometimes we have to take stern action. Can we stand about, when a handful of people destroy public property and kill innocent people?"

Inspector General of Police, Ernest Perera, Colombo, 8 June 1989

As this report has stressed above, the government and political leadership have often pressurised the police to act without restraint:

"... under pressure from the government to eradicate the JVP, the police are beginning to use heavy-handed tactics of their own. When a known JVP'er goes missing the police will arrest his wife, or his aged parents, a sort of hostage-taking is becoming almost routine..."

"The President (Jayewardene) devoted a good deal of his press-conference on Friday to discussing the threat posed by the JVP and its allies. And when he spoke to me privately

ely a week ago he was even more anxious about it, encouraging the police to take the law into their own hands to deal with members who might be faced by the courts".

M Hamyln, reporting from Tangalle as quoted in 'The SUNDAY TIMES', Colombo 2 November 1987

Sometimes, the political leadership find they must distance themselves from police brutality:

"It was the UNP that for the first time brought regulation that a High Court inquiry should be held into the death of a person who dies while in police or any custody. This was in July 1984. . ."

Minister of Security Lalith Athulathmudali in Parliament, early 1989

By and large, instead of understanding that mistakes and excesses by the police make the accomplishment of their mission much more difficult and, indeed, impossible, the tendency on the part of the government and parliamentary leadership is to excuse and even justify them as an 'inevitable' and 'expected' part of it.

"It has to be recognised the police and the armed forces having been the first target of the insurgents, that we cannot but expect a violent reaction from them. It is also inevitable that at times of civil strife the innocent are likely to suffer along with the guilty. Arrests are likely to be made on suspicion which may turn out to be unfounded or based on maliciously false information given by someone bearing a personal grudge. It is also inevitable that at times like the present exaggerated versions of various incidents will gain currency". Statement from a senior member of the government early in 1989, whom the researcher does not want to single out as it is quite similar to many other reported statements from other public figures.

This amounts to a declaration that the police will 'inevitably' and 'expectedly' fall short of their goals. It destroys any confidence that may still exist among the people. It gives no comfort to all those policemen who may be earnestly trying to fulfil their duties. From the outset, it demoralises and probably corrupts the new police recruits.

The year 1988 closed with the announcement by the Inspector General of Police about the 'immediate recruitment' of '38,000 men more as police constables' to the country's police force 'as a matter of urgent policy'.

"The new recruits will buttress the country's police force which, at present, has a strength of 26,000 and are expected to be deployed in the 380 police stations throughout the Island. The new intake will be on the basis of 100 policemen per police station and will be on a permanent basis. They are liable to be transferred to any station in the Island, depending on the requirements. The latest recruitment drive will bring the total number of policemen in the country to 64,000. In addition, 8,000 reserve policemen will bring up the total to 75,000. . . The 8,000 homeguard forces in the country are also expected to help the police. . . The recruits are expected to undergo extensive training".

From 'SUN', Colombo, 31 December 1988

The questions raised by this statement are: who are training whom and what are they being trained for?

Ideally, the police are being trained to protect the people without attacking the people. To defend life aiming not to take life. To combat killing with the capability to do it without killing. To fight terrorism without recourse to terror.

"They create JVPers through brutal, indiscriminate repression", an experienced eye-witness, a front-line lawyer, told the field researcher on the way

to the courts in Matara. It had a familiar ring. It had been heard before, in the North where the Tamil Tigers' expansion and methods were partly attributed to the methods used by the Sinhalese police against young Tamil militants at an earlier stage. Those fighting terror with terror, including torture, will be breeding terror. It may only be a matter of arms becoming available for isolated terrorism to be propagated and become mass terror. It may now herald an insurgency. The police then cannot cope. The army is called in.

Fearful Symmetry

(Continued from page 8)

Colombo, however, had insisted that the Tigers lay down arms before an election was held. Wijeratne told parliament: "Now we are going to annihilate them. Our military machine is committed to that...there is no turning back. This is not a war against the Tamils, but a war against a bunch of criminals."

On 18 June parliament unanimously passed supplementary provisions totalling Rs. 2.7 billion (US\$67.5 million) for additional defence expenditure, including the purchase of aircraft and naval vessels.

Colombo has committed aircraft and artillery to the fighting, and the LTTE has claimed over a 100,000 refugees have been created by the "massive offensive operation." India, which previously backed the Tamil militants, has adopted a neutral stance. However, diplomats say this position could change with a large influx of Tamil refugees into Indian territory. The fighting, as Premadasa has admitted, will be hard on civilians and the LTTE is now concentrating its propaganda on this aspect. One Tiger statement, issued since the Sri Lankan forces took the offensive, said "it is now clear that the Sinhala government is determined to seek a military solution to the ethnic conflict."

(Courtesy: Far Eastern Economic Review)

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Soviet Society and the changes in Eastern Europe

Reggie Siriwardena

One of the phenomena evident in Soviet society since perestroika began has been the intense concern to re-discover history — the truth about the pre-revolutionary past. However, this preoccupation is not an interest in the past for its own sake. It springs from the urgent compulsion to know how Soviet society came to be what it is, and to find in the understanding of these shaping forces the guide to the directions of change that are necessary in the present. The first expression of this re-exploration of the past was the flood of revelations about the horrors and crimes of the Stalin era that was opened up by Soviet journalistic, academic and creative writing during the initial phase of perestroika. However, it wasn't enough to know that these things had happened; it was more important to know why they had happened. The nuivity of Khrushchev's explanation — that Stalin was a bad guy — could no longer be acceptable. Hence the enormous volume of historical and theoretical writing of the last few years directed towards exploring the social and political bases of the apparatus of dictatorship and terror without which Stalin wouldn't have been possible. The fundamental problem is stated in two sentences at the end of the opening chapter in the new *History of Soviet Society*. This work is being written by a group of historians in the Institute of History of the USSR Academy of Sciences (and the first chapter has appeared in the journal *Istoriya SSSR*). I translate:

'The socialist revolution could be considered to have been genuinely completed only with the achievement of democracy. How and when did the authoritarian alternative in the development of Soviet society arise, and why did it triumph?'

That puts very succinctly and precisely the crucial questions

raised by the Soviet experience. However, until very recently, all exonerations of these questions began at 1924, the year of Lenin's death, or at best, at 1923, the year when Stalin through the troika prepared for his takeover. What is profoundly significant is that some Soviet inquirers are today going back to the Leninist era, even as far back as the October revolution itself, to answer the questions raised in the two sentences I quoted from the new *History of Soviet Society*.

In his Lenin Day address last month Gorbachev devoted one part of the speech to attacking what he called 'destructive approaches to Lenin', and said: 'They are aimed at identifying Lenin with Stalin and can paint all Soviet history black to portray the October Revolution and the ensuing events as errors and, even worse, as crimes against the nation and humanity.'

However, Gorbachev is wrong. The question is not that of 'identifying Lenin with Stalin', nor, I think, do the sober and responsible critics of Leninism in the Soviet Union today do so. There is an important difference between the two men and the two eras. Lenin preserved freedom of discussion and dissent within the ruling party, while eroding and ultimately wiping out freedom of political expression outside it. Stalin turned the ruling party itself into a monolith, crushing dissent within the ranks of the party too. But once this distinction has been made, we have to recognise that there is a continuity of historical processes between the two stages. The Communist Party could not indefinitely maintain political freedom within its own ranks once it had destroyed freedom outside them; the progression from one-party rule to the monolithic party and ultimately the dictatorship of one man was a necessary progression. Trotsky had prophe-

tically foreseen this in his pre-revolutionary polemics against Lenin, when he characterized Bolshevism as an endeavour to substitute the party for the working class, and predicted the outcome in the event of its triumph. 'The party organisation would then substitute itself for the party as a whole; then the Central Committee would substitute itself for the organisation; and finally a single dictator would substitute himself for the Central Committee.' However, Trotsky went back on this insight in entering Lenin's party in 1917, and later did even more than most of its other leaders to strengthen the centralising trends within it. The figure that deserves to be honoured most today as prophet is neither Lenin nor Trotsky but the German Communist women leader, Rosa Luxemburg. She defended the Russian Revolution against its right-wing enemies, but from the earliest days frankly and relentlessly criticised its authoritarian tendencies. After the long and tragic experience of prison camp socialism, not only in the Soviet Union but in many other post-revolutionary societies, the words of her pamphlet on the Russian Revolution have acquired an even deeper resonance than at the time they were written:

'Without a free and untrammelled press, without the unlimited right of association and assembly, the rule of the broad mass of the broad mass of the people is entirely unthinkable. . . Freedom only for the supporters of the government, only for the members of one party—however numerous they may be—is no freedom at all. Freedom is always and exclusively freedom for the one who thinks differently.'

And again, in a passage which reads like a description in advance of Soviet political life in the seven decades to come:

'With the repression of political life in the land as a whole, life in the soviets must also become more crippled. Without general elections, without unrestricted freedom of press and assembly, without a free struggle of opinion, life dies out in every public insti-

tution, becomes a mere semblance of life, in which only the bureaucracy remains as the active element. Among them, in reality only a dozen outstanding heads do the leading and an elite of the working class is invited from time to time to meetings where they are to applaud the speeches of the leaders, and to approve proposed resolutions unanimously — at bottom, then, a clique affair — a dictatorship, to be sure, not the dictatorship of the proletariat, however, but only the dictatorship of a handful of politicians. . . . Yes, we can go much further; such conditions must inevitably cause a brutalisation of public life. . . .

It isn't my intention, however, to follow the demonisation of Stalin with a demonisation of Lenin. Lenin and Leninism were a product of the Russian historical context — the belatedness of Russia's historical development, and the concomitant absence or retardedness of liberal enlightenment, bourgeois advancement and democratic political culture. Leninist authoritarianism thus took on the imprint of the very power structures it overthrew. I fully agree that any society with a legacy of belated historical development will have to contend with similar burdens of the past in seeking to revolutionise itself. But what was destructive about Leninism was that it made the political forms evolved in the underground struggle against Tsarism the ideal and sought to recreate the whole of society in the image of the centralised party. This was fatal. The subjective drives of Leninism towards the imposition of social goals determined by a revolutionary elite on the rest of society worked together with the objective circumstances — the cultural gulf between the mass of the people and the leaders — to make dictatorship inevitable.

Since then the Leninist model — further debased and brutalised by Stalinism — has established itself, with the prestigious authority of the first socialist revolution, as the example to be emulated by all third world socialisms. Wherever Leninist parties have come into power, the dangerous combination

of the subjective drive towards authoritarianism inherent in their ideology and the objective social circumstances favouring such a development have manifested themselves in practice. The indifference or downright hostility of many Asian Marxist parties to perestroika is not surprising: it goes against the grain of their whole political culture. The contrast between, say, the reaction of the CPI (M) and that of the Italian Communist Party, which has dissolved itself and is rethinking its future, is a measure of the distance between the two worlds.

One of the consequences of the belatedness in historical development that I have been talking about is the tendency to compensate psychologically for it by claiming the privileges of backwardness. There are many examples in Russian history — from the Slavophiles and Narodniks who thought Russia could avoid the fate of the West by by-passing capitalism, to Lenin and Trotsky imagining in 1917 that Russia could lead the European revolution, to Stalin proclaiming socialism in one country. However, under Asian conditions, with their even greater belatedness of development, these aberrations became further accentuated, as in Maoism with its idealisation of the peasantry. After perestroika and the Eastern European revolution there is a danger that some Asian political groups will see themselves as the protectors of socialist orthodoxy against a decadent western world enticed by the fleshpots of capitalism. This tendency is present among some Sri Lankan socialists too. I see this as a phenomenon within the socialist camp analogous to the rejection of Western thought by the nationalist prebenders of 'jatika chintanaya'. Let us remember, therefore, that political democracy, the rule of law and human rights today represent fundamental and universal advances, and that any socialism that turns its back on them is really perpetuating the ideology of a pre-capitalist past.

In conclusion I wish to say that I don't want to indulge in any

ecphoria about either the Eastern European or the Soviet developments. That Stalinism has been discarded in the Soviet Union, that Leninism has been thrown out back, stock and barrel in Eastern Europe, are good things as far as they go. But all these countries face a host of complex and arduous problems, and there is no guarantee that their future path will be smooth or peaceful. The burdens of historical belatedness are not to be cast off in a day or a decade. Let me finish by quoting the concluding paragraphs from an article written last year in 'Ogonyok', the most independent and forthright of Soviet periodicals, by a man whom I regard as one of the wisest political commentators today in the Soviet Union, Vyacheslav Kostikov. Its immediate purpose was to warn against over-expectations after the first sessions of the newly elected Congress of People's Deputies. But the political wisdom of his remarks is, I think, equally relevant to Eastern Europe today, and has also its moral for us in our very different political circumstances. I translate from the original:

"It does not follow that we should surrender to illusions and suppose that in one day democracy will reign among us. Enough of utopia! The years of a mature democracy are counted in centuries. Glushnik, freedom of the word, parliamentarism, are only the attributes and the instruments of democracy. And those who expected from the first Congress of People's Deputies a miracle — the speedy introduction by decree of democracy from the western borders to the shores of the Pacific will surely be disappointed.

"To the emerging civil society the Congress of People's Deputies has given that without which no democracy can grow — the taste of freedom. Having tasted of what was yesterday still that 'forbidden fruit' the Soviet people, like the Biblical Adam and Eve, will assuredly no longer be able and no longer desire to live in the sterile mythical paradise, but will prefer the 'sinful world' of democracy."

Whither Russia?

(APN's Parliamentary Correspondent Vladimir Ostrovsky interviews Yuri Manayenkov, Secretary of the CPSU Central Committee and Member of Russia's Bureau of the CPSU Central committee).

Question: Talking with me a month ago, you strongly came out in favour of the founding of a Communist Party of Russia (CPR) and argued that it should be a part of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU). What changes, if any have occurred over the past month? How do you view the problem of CPR today?

Answer: The Communist Party conferences held across Russia in recent time strongly favoured the founding of a CPR. This fact added substance to the arguments of those Russian Communists who want CPR to become part of the CPSU. The forthcoming conference of the Communists of Russia will, naturally, become a special event. First, it has not precedent in the history of our Party. Second it will probably become a constituent congress where the formation of a CPR will be announced. This is why the conference will be a historic event in the life of the Communists of Russia.

Q: What are your views on the proposed new division of the CPSU? In what way will it differ from the CPSU and what common features will they have? Will the Russian Federation stand to gain from the founding of a CPR?

A: It is not my personal views that matter. It seems to me that the collective opinion of the Communists of Russia is much more important. And they did voice their opinion during recent Party conference and discussions at Party clubs, as well as through the Press, Radio and Television. Summing up the important things, I would say that they strongly hope for a decisive step forward in the political reform. There is no doubt that this will promote the cause of perestroika.

What will CPR be like? It is going to an alliance of Communists who share the same views based on the ideas of Marx, Engels and Lenin. It is going to be a Party of socialist choice expressing the interests of workers, peasants and intellectuals. It will have to develop in a creative and constructive manner, the Marxist teaching in new conditions of the world that is changing before our own eyes. It will arm itself with everything valuable to be found in social thought and historical experience of the 20th Century. And, of course, it means creating equal conditions, within the CPSU, for the Communists of Russia alongside the Communists Parties of other Union Republics.

Quite understandably, the difficulties and contradictions of the current political moment will leave a certain imprint on the forthcoming Congress and its work. You must have noticed that our perestroika processes slackened to a certain extent. Unfortunately, we see that some of them are slowing down or making no progress. Sound decisions have been taken, however, organisational work among the people should clearly be intensified. To implement our political directives, Russia's Communists should organize themselves. The task in the run-up to the Conference/Congress, if I may say so, is to devise ways of becoming a truly vanguard ideological and political force of Russia, and to found a Communist Party of the Russian Federation to this end. This is the main objective of the forthcoming conference, as I see it.

Q: This means that the All-Russia Communist Party Conference will become a congress which will found a CPR. Which

documents could, in your opinion, the congress pass? What does the draft of its agenda look like?

A: Possibly, it will pass a declaration on the founding of a CPR in order to work out a fundamental programmatic document of the Communists of Russia. It should evidently chart our road into the future and define how this should be done.

Certain documents of the future congress are being drafted right now. In addition to the members of Russia's Bureau of the CPSU Central Committee and the preparatory committee members, delegates to the conference and the 28th CPSU Congress are engaged in this work. I must tell you that we are open — open to all trends that showed themselves in recent times. For instance, we invited representatives of the constituent congress of the Communists of Russia held in Leningrad not so long ago to work side by side with us. This is very important because, in addition to everything else, a CPR should lead the struggle for the socialist ideals, for the idea of Communism. We are to determine our position in no uncertain terms. It is my firmly held view that socialism exists as a political, economic and legal form of society's existence. It has such inherent features as humanism and democracy. Any other brand of socialism, in my opinion, simply should not be built.

As for resolutions to be discussed, I would mention the following in a strictly preliminary way: On the founding of a CPR, on the draft platform (policy document) of the CPSU for the 28th Party Congress, on the draft CPSU rules, on problems of the nationalities policy. An address to the peoples of Russia will evidently also be required.

Q: What about the Party press for Russia, as well as Russia's own Radio and Television? as I see it, Russia does not have all this.

(Continued on page 27)

Dynamics of Sociocultural Change in Sri Lanka

Sunil Goonasekera

Science emerged through the growth of industrial capitalism, particularly since the Enlightenment of the European cultures. The Enlightenment and Kantian philosophy removed the religious world view from philosophical discourses. Instead, science became the only key to the reality. Scientific attitude became the guiding principle of philosophy. The power of science, of the experimental positive inquiry into the nature of things, was so much so that it led to a strong and radical denystification of the way people saw themselves in the world. Religious ideas and values, the entire ritual apparatus and the very cosmology became irrelevant in the practical concerns in the world. The lonely individual, struggling for survival, emerged from this embattled philosophical landscape.

This entered Sri Lankan culture through the school system and radiated from the urban centers to the rural peripheries. At first it attacked the indigenous cultural ideas and then it attacked even Christianity. The Buddhist response was to say that Buddhism was, unlike Christianity and other theistic belief systems, a scientific religion. But this did not resolve the essential crisis engendered by the contacts with scientific ideology. The essential crisis was not a matter of the institutionalized religion but a matter of the sense of the self, of morality, of ethics even of aesthetics in general. The new world view was entirely amoral, non-ethical and non-aesthetic. Rather, it concentrated on the mechanics of existence. This is how the crisis of the selfhood, I discussed earlier, was intellectually created.

In Sri Lanka, this sociocultural change is not at all a completed process. In fact, the Western researchers, experts of every descrip-

tion who arrive in Sri Lanka on various advisory missions, deplore the slow rate of change and the local intellectual inertia which permit the survival of the non-scientific attitudes towards life in general. Theorists, from Myrdal to Marxists, who discuss Sri Lankan economic development, contend that lack of individualism, lack of time consciousness, nepotism, favoritism and adherence to what they call superstitions are among the key impediments to economic growth. By no means is this process complete even in the West. My experiences there over a decade pointed to the lingering power of the traditional culture. But this is fast eroding, to the point of producing mere cultural faades, dead artifacts with only a decorative function and economic value tourist attractions. In this society also during the past few decades, the rate of change accelerated suddenly. The ever widening dissemination of scientism and the economic isolation of the individual seem to provide the dynamism for the change. Further, scientists as well as certain political ideologues openly ridiculed religion thinking that such deriding would liberate men from superstitions and help him become modern. And scientists criticized the existing connecting threads without any ideas about alternatives. Naïve scientific idealists, who thought that science would one day create a world of dispassionate individuals who would accept their lot in life with philosophical calm, only destroyed what little we had without presenting an alternative. But little did they realize that they were throwing away the baby with the bath water.

In our country the results were visible. Erosion of indigenous as well as exogenous spiritual values, which gave life a moral and ethical dimension, produced naked expl-

oration of the others and the world at large. The self as in selfishness became the most important thing to an individual. Money became the yardstick to measure the value of everything. Material possessions and social power became the indices of success. Conscience receded to the unconscious, finding expression only through nightmares and bizarre pathological conduct. Not surprisingly, traditional religiosity, which emerged from the conscience, and traditional spirituality became subsumed under ritualism and magic. Today a religious man is not necessarily a spiritual, moral, ethical man. Rather, he is a devotee of this god or that spirit, a member of this cult or that cult, all of which function merely to enhance the self in selfishness. Spirituality lost its moorings when men took spirit cults and magic as signs of spirituality. Science did not solve all the problems in social existence. Instead it only dismantled what it thought was impedimentary to personal freedom of individuals. Even where it is admitted that men are, in fact, not free and cannot be free, as in psychoanalysis, the dismantling of the traditional spirituality goes on unabated without any signs of an effective replacement. Instead, men are kindly advised to bare the brunt of their private burdens or visit a shrink.

It is one thing to remove traditional impediments to personal social enhancement and to national economic growth. It is another thing to have a society peopled by individuals who understand only the law of the jungle. Right now what we have is a society without an ideology, without a system of standards which provides moral and ethical threads that would give men an identifiable and worthy sense of the self, and integrate these ruthless methodological individuals into a coherent

compassionate whole. At the moment, the ideological vacuum which reckless scientism produced is threatening to disintegrate the society. Today this country is splitting apart along ethnic, linguistic and religious lines. What is remarkable is that kinship and religion which provided social cohesion are being displaced by politicoeconomic opportunism which invokes language, kinship, religion, race and class to serve the private purposes of unscrupulous men.

In this rather dismal sociocultural context de Chardin's philosophy sounds very noble but rather naively optimistic. Are we really evolving towards the Omega point where differences cease to matter due to the presence of an all embracing all pervading ideology? It is clear that the politicoeconomic imperialism of the mega powers and ideological imperialism of scientism (whether of the laboratory variety or otherwise does not matter) are threatening to eradicate sociocultural uniqueness and identity of smaller and politicoeconomically weaker nations. The response from these subjugated and threatened nations is a violent reassertion of themselves and growth of chauvinism, jingoism and violence. Imperialism coercively unites while effectively dismembering traditions and identities producing social catastrophes. Where is the Omega point?

Evolution undoubtedly pivots around adaptive change in time. The Darwinian theory, which is the ideologically going concern in science, does not predict the future of man. It discusses how we came to be the way we are, retrospectively. What has been points to the present. But science, while being a predictive enterprise hesitates to predict cosmological trends. From a scientific perspective Omega point is a possibility but not a certainty. In this context Omega point is yet another utopian idea which belongs in the realm of intellectually discredited mysticism and religion. Positivist science, anthropology in particular, sees de Chardin's idea in the same

contents as what it calls millenarian movements and utopianism.

Just as much as the so called millenarian movements and other varieties of utopianism the Omega point is also couched not in facts but in hopes. The idea of the Omega point can be best appreciated as a call for action rather as a prediction of a certain occurrence. Teilhard de Chardin's thoughts did not develop in a sociocultural vacuum. It is obvious that the fragmentation of Europe, warfare, loss of authority of religion, growth of materialistic attitudes towards life and the alienation of persons and communities in the waves of politicoeconomic developments, touched the hearts of many sensitive minds. Emile Durkheim, the father of scientific sociology, was worried about the possible outcome of this depersonalization of man, and thought about creating a new religion which would withstand the scrutiny of science so that solidarity among men and their personal and social integrity could be preserved. Max Weber had not felt very cheery about the prospects of increasing rationalization and demythologization of religion which cause the increasing isolation of the individual, rendering life to be an unaesthetic existentially worthless phenomenon. Karl Marx's response was more heated. He, as we all know, demanded a revolution to make what he considered as the inevitable utopia a historical-existent reality. Teilhard de Chardin's viewpoint should be understood in this wider intellectual context. Like Marx he presents a vision of the future. His vision, though not scientific, cannot be dismissed as the fantasy of a dreamer. Rather, like in Marx, the prediction must be redefined as a call for action, as the presentation of an ideal to achieve which men must strive hard.

On the other hand it is also necessary to bring such a program of action under close scrutiny. The current notions of

internationalism, global village, universalism, and so on are not free from political content. Obviously the idea of the Omega implies all these. But who decides as to what the shape of this new spiritual reintegration of men should be? Whose idea of spirituality should it be? Teilhard de Chardin's own idea was a christological one. Will this be acceptable to the non-Christians among us? One finds a comparable Hindu notion in the Upanishads, in the Bhagavat Gita and in the philosophy of Sri Aurobindo. In Buddhism, a reading of the Vimalakirti Nirdesha Sutra reveals a comparable idea, that liberation from suffering and spiritual awakening occurs together with the collapse of all differences, all boundaries, all distinctions, all evaluations. There are other faiths which are not usually open to contamination from external ideas. Within these variegated motifs of spiritual beliefs how can a spiritual integration of all faiths, all cultures, be effected without having to deal with the rather murky questions of imperialism and hegemony?

Perhaps the answer to this rather difficult culturally and politically sensitive issue is the development of hermeneutic which would cut across the boundaries between cultures and religious systems, a hermeneutic through which the spiritual horizons of the different faiths would meet and enter into a compassionate discourse, a hermeneutic which would, in a Bultmannian sense, demythologize religious particularism to touch the human spirit and help it open to pan human spiritual concerns which would fructify in every field of sociocultural existence. Perhaps, only such an exercise can save our Sri Lankan community from further disintegration both at communal and personal spheres of its existence. Only such an exercise seem to be able to point out the practical aspects of de Chardin's contribution to uplift our hopes for a better tomorrow.

THE ISRAELI LOBBY

Izeth Hussain

In my talk I dealt with the familiar UNP charge that it was under S. W. R. D. Bandaranaike's Premiership that the Israeli Embassy was first established in Colombo. In 1958 he explained in Parliament that it was in consequence of a commitment made to Israel by the previous UNP Government. He chose not to explain the actual circumstances under which the Embassy came to be established. Although he had not agreed to its establishment, the first Israeli Charge arrived at the airport accompanied by his wife and children, he himself carrying a baby in his arms. The Charge pretended that the Government had agreed to the establishment of the mission. Evidently S. W. R. D., to whom the matter would have been reported, felt that it was too embarrassing to ask the charge and his family to depart straightaway. As for what he really felt about Israel, he was quite explicit in Parliament in 1958. Recounting a conversation he had had with Mrs. Golda Meir at the UN, he quoted the Arab proverb that a camel first puts its head into the tent and then takes it over in its entirety. He predicted that Israel would expand in ten years or so. It did, just nine years later into what was left of Palestine. The UNP must face up to the fact that, until the recent change, the UNP and the SLFP have been at polar opposites over Israel.

The analysis I have made of Israel's international significance and of the pro-Israeli Sri Lankan, may be controversial but that cannot in any way invalidate my arguments for the closure of the IIS. Before expounding those arguments, I must deal with some themes that keep recurring in pro-Israel letters to the editor.

Much is made of the point that the PLO provided training

to some Tamil militants. In my readings on Israel, I have invariably found that reference is made in this connection only to the group of George Habbash, a group that is not quite typical of the PLO, or of the Palestine People, or the Arabs as a whole, as it is a Marxist group. We must remember that the PLO is not a government but loosely-knit organization. The PLO cannot be damned because of the misbehaviour of one group. In any case, the Habbash group may have trained a few militants, nothing compared to the hordes of militants trained in India. But despite that Indian training, we have to maintain the friendliest possible relations with India as that is obviously required by our national interest. The issue of PLO training is irrelevant to whether or not the IIS had to be closed down.

Another familiar theme is that we need Israeli expertise for our dry zone agriculture. But the most spectacular achievement in making the desert bloom is that of Saudi Arabia, so that we should really turn to that country for dry zone expertise. The economic argument for retaining the I.I.S. makes no sense whatever considering the economic disparity between the oil-rich Arabs and Israel. But that argument is also irrelevant, in my view, for reasons which will be given later.

An obsession with our pro-Israelis is that we have to show gratitude to Israel for its help over the Eelam problem. But it seems rather naive to imagine that Israel, which can hardly exist without massive infusions of American and Zionist funds, could have bothered on its own about what was happening in distant Sri Lanka, a country at that time had no international influence at all. What on earth could Israel have expected

to gain? It is known that whenever the US Government cannot intervene directly because of anticipated objections from Congress, it gets Israel to act on its behalf. In fact it was reported some years ago that US Ambassador-at-large Vernon Walters had made the decision to ask Israel to get cracking in Sri Lanka. It seems to me obvious that the Israelis came here at the behest of the Americans. Therefore, we might show gratitude to the Americans, not the Israelis.

But it has to be asked whether any gratitude is due, considering Israeli activities here appear to have compounded the Eelam problem. Israel has gained an unfortunate reputation for showing a brutal contemptuousness towards natives and their rights. It was not accidental, some think, that around 1982 Israel got into a close embrace with Zaire's Mobutu Sese Seko, one of the most notorious rapists of human rights in this century. When for the first time invading South African troops in Angola massacred helpless old men, women, and children, it was alleged that Israel had exported its West Bank expertise to Africa. A speaker at the Islamic Centre meeting said that one of our Buddhist monks had prepared a map showing that wherever there was an Israeli presence in Sri Lanka, the worst massacres had taken place. Admittedly there is no proof that the Israelis had worsened our problems by encouraging sadistic brutality, but a little detail from Chandraprema's book of the IVP which appeared in the *Island* of 12th April, 1990 seems revealing to him Moshe Levi, an Israeli war hero and good friend of Ravi Jayewardene, had told our former President that "you don't talk to terrorists, you kill them." Perhaps instead of showing gratitude we should really demand compensation.

Since the I.I.S. closure a new argument has surfaced that it is inconsistent with positive trends in international relations, meaning that many nations have been establishing relations with each other. But very few in fact have resumed relations with Israel among the Afro-Asian countries. Even fewer countries have made some overtures to Israel, evidently in anticipation of an international conference on the Middle East. More recently, some East European countries have resumed relations with Israel as part of their assertion of independence from the Soviet Union. But it is surely a non-sequitur to argue that because some other countries have resumed relations with Israel, the I.I.S. should not have been closed down.

I come now to my arguments in favour of the I.I.S. closure. An English bishop observed way back in the eighteenth century that every-thing is what it is and not something else. Sri Lanka is Sri Lanka, and not some other country, and whether the I.I.S. should have been closed down or not is a question that has to be determined in terms of Sri Lanka's national interests, not the interests of Israel or some other country. I argued in my talk that the continuance of the I.I.S. was totally inconsistent with any degree of good relations with India, and good relations with India are obviously of crucial importance for our national interest. My second argument was that Sri Lankan Muslims wanted the I.I.S. closure, and the national interest requires that their sentiments and interest be given appropriate weight.

That good relations with India are crucial for our national interest hardly needs arguing considering what has been happening to Sri Lanka during this decade. But it will be argued that Sri Lanka as sovereign state should never bow to the dictates of India. Unfortunately, it is not a question of bowing to Indian dictates but of limited sovereignty. It is not just

small and powerless countries such as Sri Lanka, but at the other end of the spectrum the super-powers as well who have to take into account all sorts of constraining factors in managing their relations with the rest of the world. They cannot behave or misbehave just as they like without taking account of the interests of other countries, unless of course they are determined to come to grief. We have to take account of India's interests, not just our interests if we are to maintain good relations with India.

On the face of it, it does seem preposterous that India should object to an Israeli presence here while it allows an Israeli Consulate to function in Bombay. Actually there is a world of difference between allowing very limited consular functions to be performed in Bombay, and our having allowed Mossad and Shin Beth to operate in Sri Lanka, as well as quite obviously in South India. Instead of labouring the obvious, it should suffice to state quite simply that we cannot risk jeopardizing good relations with India for the sake of Israel.

My second argument was that the sentiments and interests of Sri Lankan Muslims who wanted the I.I.S. to be closed down, had to be given appropriate weight in the national interest. As in the case of the Philipines to which I referred earlier, the Muslims of this country should be regarded as "our Muslims" by the other ethnic groups. Their intense anti-Israeli sentiments should prevail over the intense pro-Israeli commitment of the Sri Lankan pro-Israelis, because the latter are not Jews. If they were Jews they too should be regarded as "our Jews," and their commitment to Israel should be respected and given appropriate weight as an understandable and perfectly natural phenomenon arising out of a bond with their co-religionists abroad, just as in the case of the Muslim's bond with the Palestinians. But they are

not Jews and therefore their motivations have to be analysed, as I have done in this article, whereas the Muslims' anti-Israeli sentiments have to be given their appropriate weight. It should be obvious that as ours is a multi ethnic society, our national interest requires that each of our ethnic groups be regarded as an integral part of "our people", and that they be respected. Otherwise we can never work through to anything like a national identity.

I must now recount some observations I made in my talk about a letter to a newspaper which, in my view, shows that pro-Israeli attitudes usually go together with contemptuousness towards Muslims. Speaker Mr. Mohamed, who it was reported had requested the President to close down the I.I.S., was told in the letter that he represented only a minority. The Muslim minority has lived in this country for over a thousand years, far longer than relatively recent immigrants from South India who have become assimilated as Sinhalese because of the accommodativeness of Sinhalese civilization, about which our majority community can be proud. For instance, what our sociologists now call the KSD castes came to the island after 1300, most of them in fact after 1505. The Muslims have a greater claim to be sons of the soil than many Sinhalese, it would appear. Therefore their sentiments about Israel should not be dismissed as merely those of a minority.

The same letter, arguing that gratitude should be shown to Israel, went on to say that the majority community of this country understands what gratitude is, meaning obviously that the Muslims don't. The muslims, I pointed out, are the only Sri Lankan people, apart that is from some miniscule minorities, who have never betrayed the people of this country whereas the Sinhalese themselves have betrayed the Sinhalese. They never invaded the island, and never go together with foreigners against the people of this country. Hated by the Portuguese they fought for the Sinha-

lease kings, and they were likewise hated by the Dutch as trade rivals. There was no British hatred against them mercifully, but they stuck to trade and never ascended to privileged positions under imperial patronage at the expense of the majority. When the time came for independence they wholeheartedly supported the Sinhalese against the Tamil "fifty-fifty" demand. They even supported "Sinhala Only" although the great majority of Muslims had Tamil as their mother-tongue. And they have been against Eelam. Should there be a threat from India, the Muslims' Islamic bond with Pakistan will surely dictate staunch loyalty to the Sinhalese. It was time, I argued, for a manifestation of Sinhalese gratitude towards the Muslims. It was time, in other words, to close down the I.I.S.

The majoritarian arrogance displayed in that letter shows clearly that some Sinhalese at least simply cannot conceive of the Sri Lankan Muslims as "our Muslims". I suspect that they themselves constitute a minority, that is to say a minority among the Sinhalese whose attitudes to Muslims are generally very different. I have written that the sentiments and interests of the Muslims should be given appropriate weight. I have now to address the question of whether the Sri Lankan pro-

Israelis would have worked together with the Israelis as a lobby against the interests of our Muslims. Certainly the Muslims have regarded the Israeli presence in this country as something inimical to their interests.

Commonsense suggests that as Muslims all over the world are anti-Israel, the Israelis will be anti-Muslim and could work against Muslim interests wherever there is an Israeli presence. Jan Nederveen Pieterse, a Western Scholar, wrote in an article serialized in several issues of the Lanka Guardian in 1985, "In Africa Israel finds political niches on the side of Christian groups resisting Islamic inroads, and certain Asian countries call on Israel as a counter-weight to Islamic influence." He wrote further, "No longer a bridge between Christianity and Islam, Israelis have become the allies of Christianity." I am quite sure that in Sri Lanka the Israelis could have used pro-Israelis from a very broad spectrum, not just from the Christian or any particular group or sub-group. I have made some observations in this article about the ragbag pro-Israelis whose pro-Israeli commitment cannot be explained in terms of group affiliations. The Israelis could even have used Muslims, say for instance a gem-smuggler vulnerable

to blackmail, to push down their fellow-Muslims. In any case Pieterse provides some substantiation for the commonsense expectation that the Israelis could work against Muslims in Sri Lanka, using pro-Israelis for that purpose.

Commonsense again suggests that in working against our Muslims the Israelis would not have bothered about the appointment of Muslims as cooks or bus conductors. And commonsense suggests further that the position could have been quite different when it came to the appointment of a Muslim to a relatively prestigious position, more particularly one in which he could influence international relations.

At the Islamic Centre meeting I was asked whether the Israeli paw could have been behind the uniquely shabby treatment to which a Muslim official was subjected under the 1977 Government. He was appointed Ambassador to a Western post, the foreign Government's concurrence to the appointment was obtained, that Government fixed a date for the presentation of his credentials, his airticket was booked and a date set for his departure. He was then informed that a problem had cropped up, which would take a little time to resolve. The supposed problem, which was straight out of the nonsense literature of Lewis Carroll and Edward Lear, was not taken seriously by anyone. Some months later he was offered the post as Ambassador to a Muslim country, without being proffered any explanation whatever for the cancellation of the original appointment. A supposed aspirant to the original post was not being appointed either, and the post was kept vacant for months. The Muslim officer declined the offer on the ground that for 23 years he had been serving only in Afro-Asian posts, a record unmatched by any of his colleagues in all the decades since Sri Lanka's independence. It must be stated that the appropriate authorities made it quite clear that there was absolutely nothing against the Muslim offi-

TALE TIME IN TROTSKY LAND

(DODDEREL)

*Dear me, we hear the white Rabbit wail
Someones treading on my Trotskering tail
Will I be late? Will I be fossilised?
It ticks away always at four in my pocket.
After darkness at noon it is twilight at Four
Still the 20th Congress behind the March Hare's door.
Pushkins the fashion and Peter the Great
History is blistery at a rewritten rate
Nikita, Alexei, Lev Brezhnev and Mike
Has each had his revision re-re-revised
So what is the truth only Time will reveal
From the Fourth Eye Archives with fossilous zeal.*

D. KARUNATILAKE

cer. It appears that under the 1977 Government he could be sent as Ambassador only to a Muslim country or to some other relatively unimportant country. The nonsense explanation for the postponement of his original appointment, and the failure to provide any explanation whatever for its cancellation, suggests strongly that an unknown factor was in operation. That factor the Government dared not divulge. Was that factor Israel?

My hypothesis will not seem fanciful or far-fetched to anyone who takes a look at Paul Findley's *They Dare to Speak Out*, a well-documented book by a U. S. Congressman with access to important personages, providing stunning revelations about the tremendous power wielded by the Israeli lobby in the U.S. George Ball, one the brilliant Americans of his time who certainly would have made an outstanding Secretary of State, never could get the post even though he was Carter's first choice, because of the Israeli lobby. His crime was to put America first over Israel. All State Department secret material of interest to Israel is immediately leaked to the lobby, and that with impunity as the last time an official was punished for a leak to Israel was in 1954. When the U.S. Ambassador in Syria sent a classified cable to the State Department in 1981, Congressman Stephen Solarz got hold of it and actually had the nerve to telephone Secretary of State Cyrus Vance demanding the removal of the Ambassador. Any U.S. official who is unsympathetic to Israel will have to face the consequences of his folly. Findley writes "To strike back at Government officials considered to be unsympathetic to Israeli needs the pro-Israel lobby singles them out for personal attack and even the wrecking of their careers." If that is Israel's power in super-power America, what could they not have done under our 1977 Government? One wonders what there is behind our President's reported election pledge, which I have already quoted and quote again for emphasis, "All the forces that exist in Sri Lanka and work against the aspirations of the Muslim community will be sent away after I come to power."

I have argued that the sentiments and interests of the Muslims in relation to the I.I.S. had to be given appropriate weight. I have not argued that the I.I.S. should have been closed down merely because the Muslims wanted that done, only that their views be given appropriate weight. For a minority's views to become a determinant of foreign policy, they have to cohere with the national interest. I would argue against Muslims who might want the Government to become active on Pakistan's behalf over the Kashmir problem as that would disturb the good relations we require with India in the national interest. In the case of the I.I.S. our Muslims' position has cohered absolutely with the national interest. □

Determination...

(Continued from page 1)

For example, both Tamil Nadu Tamils and Sri Lankan Tamils possess only transferrin C (with same frequency 1.000). In contrast, the frequency of transferrin C in Sinhalese and Veddah are 0.988 and 0.890 respectively. Whereas Tamils from Tamil Nadu and Sri Lanka do not possess other transferrin types, Sinhalese do have two more transferrins; transferrin B with frequency 0.006 and transferrin D with frequency 0.064. The veddahs do not have transferrin B, but do possess two subtypes of transferrin D (One of which is identical to that of Sinhalese) with frequencies 0.094 and 0.016 (source: *Races, Types and Ethnic Groups*, by Stephen Molnar, Prentice Hall, NJ, 1975, p. 84).

If Hussain is ignorant of this development during the past four decades, I would suggest that he refer to the contributions of A. E. Mourant, W. C. Boyd, C. S. Coon, S. M. Garn, L. L. Cavalli-Sforza, M. Nei and A. K. Roychoudhury. Based on the data published by these biomedical scientists, one can conclude that there exists hardly any distinction between the Tamils of Tamil Nadu and Sri Lanka. I assert again that Izeth Hussain's thesis is made ridiculous by the biomedical data reported in the last three decades.

In this field, for those who are interested, I also wish to mention that N. Nagaratnam (ex-consultant physician at the Colombo General Hospital) have published a well compiled review entitled, "Hemoglobinopathies in Sri Lanka and their anthropological implications" (*Hemoglobin*, vol. 13, pp.201-211, 1989) recently, which traced the origin of the Sinhalese.

Finally, about the role MGR played while he was alive, during the IPKF-LTTE confrontation (Oct - Dec 1987), I am of the opinion that Hussain is still ignorant of MGR's multi-faceted role in the Belam issue. So he hides his ignorance with the qualifying phrase, "as far as I am aware", without challenging the article of Salamat Ali (a well known observer of the Indian scene) which I had quoted. Those who have studied MGR's professional career hold the view that his public posture was made of one thing but his private actions mostly contradicted his public posture. And he made it look that way to confound his critics. And though Janaki Ramachandran, the widow of MGR, functioned as the Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu in Jan. 1988, as any astute Tamil Nadu watcher (but hardly Izeth Hussain!) would state, she was just a puppet of one faction of MGR's party. This was later proved by her quick exit from the local political scene. So, it is ridiculous again for Hussain to compare the actions of MGR's widow to that of MGR.

Sachi Sri Kantha

Philadelphia,
USA

Whither Russia ?

(Continued from page 21)

A: You are right. Russia is deprived in this sense. We are to found our own newspaper, a theoretical journal and other publications. Russia should have its own News Agency, Television and Radio services. In one word, the founding of a CPR is a package of problems and questions. In many ways, we will have to begin from scratch.

(APN)



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Habit among our
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Our efforts have paid dividends
Since today we account
For the highest Savings
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